

## BOOKS &amp; PRINTS

## ARNOLD BENNETT

## The collected works.

We have the following uniformly bound, hardback titles to offer. All prices include postage & packing. Send cash with order.

**£2.50** *Boy and Soul, the Bright Island, Flare, Faint Swimmer, Friendship and Happiness, The Great Adventure, How to live on twenty-four hours a day, The Humorous Machine, Judith London Life, The Love Match, Married Life, My Project (the play), The reasonable life, Self and Self Management, The Tale, When the Public Vents*

**£2.50** *Cupid and Commensality, The Honeycomb, Literary Taste, Mediterranean Scenes, Monte Efficacy, Over There, Piccadilly, Pointe à la Pêche, The Unweaving Room, The Unweaving, The Truth about an Author, What are the dead? Your United States, Arnold Bennett Calendar Iconic, Frank Bennett*

**£2.75** *An addition to the Journal of Arnold Bennett, Milestones*  
**£2.00** *The Gates of Venice, How to become an Author, How to make the best of life, The Last of Chiusa, Tenses of Writing, Street*

**£2.50** *Fenn & Fiction, Journal of things old & new, A Man from the North*  
**£2.50** *The Ghost, Hugo, Our Women, Mr. Prohack*  
**£2.75** *The Book of Carols, Books & Persons, A Great man, Hazen with the high hand, Lichen, The Saviour of Life, The Smokey of War, The Stroke of Luck and Dream of Damsy, The Vengued*

**£4.00** *Annals of the Five Towns, The City of Phosure, Denny the Audacious, From the top of the Voice, The Ganges, The Grand Babylon Road, The Gun article of the five towns, The Journal of Arnold Bennett, Vol. 1, Vol. 2, Vol. 3, Lanyon, The Line Stone, The Pearly Jack, The Old Adam, The Regent, Tales of the five towns, Things that have interested me, vol. 1, 2 & 3, The Woman who stole everything, Arnold Bennett by Dorothy Croston Bennett*

**£4.50** *Middle Lessons, The Metaphor of the Five Towns and other stories, The Night Visitor and other stories, Paris nights, The price of love, The Roll Call, These Towns, When God hath joined*

**£5.00** *Chivango, The Old Wives Tale*  
**£6.00** *The Arnold Bennett Omnibus book*  
 Send also for the following separate lists:  
 American, Art Books, Military, Black Studies, History and Politics, Travel & Topography, Economics, Linguistics

**RICHARD BOOTH (BOOKSELLER) LTD**  
**FRANK LEWIS HOUSE**  
**HAYDON WYE**  
**HEREFORD**

Tel: 0487/820322 We are the world's largest secondhand bookseller.  
 Secondhand books bought anywhere in the world.

**ASIA & AFRICA** Catalogues issued  
 A.C. 30 Station Rd.  
 Twickenham, Mx. L114

**BOOKS from America**, any U.S.  
 books/supplier, 1200  
 2nd Ave, PO 2064, Ornet Neck,  
 N.Y. 11769

**LEARNED** Scientific and Argu-  
 mented Journals, 1981,  
 Gardner, Ltd, 78-80, Brentford  
 Hill, London, N.16. 01-806 (011)

**HAZELDEN BOOKS** will Modern  
 First Editions (1st issue) and 61  
 Bantam, 10, Loughborough, L1 3JL  
 Tel: 0533 208 111

**OUT-OF-PRINT** and obsolete books  
 searched for and reprinted - Alan  
 Turner, 20, Yeadon Park, Mx. L114

**ANY American books**, now or out-of-  
 print - Grey Books, 26-30 Elliott  
 Avenue, Road Park, New York 11374. L114

**THE GREENLIST FORTNIGHTLY** -  
 1000 old books in each issue.  
 Sample copy free.  
 Banks, Ecclefield, Sheffield. L114

**BOOKS, Printing, Moving, Thin-**  
 gins out, Siddley and Hammond  
 Ltd, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24,  
 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42,  
 44, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60,  
 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78,  
 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96,  
 98, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110,  
 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124,  
 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138,  
 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152,  
 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166,  
 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180,  
 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192, 194,  
 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 206, 208,  
 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 222,  
 224, 226, 228, 230, 232, 234, 236,  
 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250,  
 252, 254, 256, 258, 260, 262, 264,  
 266, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278,  
 280, 282, 284, 286, 288, 290, 292,  
 294, 296, 298, 300, 302, 304, 306,  
 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320,  
 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334,  
 336, 338, 340, 342, 344, 346, 348,  
 350, 352, 354, 356, 358, 360, 362,  
 364, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 376,  
 378, 380, 382, 384, 386, 388, 390,  
 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404,  
 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418,  
 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432,  
 434, 436, 438, 440, 442, 444, 446,  
 448, 450, 452, 454, 456, 458, 460,  
 462, 464, 466, 468, 470, 472, 474,  
 476, 478, 480, 482, 484, 486, 488,  
 490, 492, 494, 496, 498, 500, 502,  
 504, 506, 508, 510, 512, 514, 516,  
 518, 520, 522, 524, 526, 528, 530,  
 532, 534, 536, 538, 540, 542, 544,  
 546, 548, 550, 552, 554, 556, 558,  
 560, 562, 564, 566, 568, 570, 572,  
 574, 576, 578, 580, 582, 584, 586,  
 588, 590, 592, 594, 596, 598, 600,  
 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, 612, 614,  
 616, 618, 620, 622, 624, 626, 628,  
 630, 632, 634, 636, 638, 640, 642,  
 644, 646, 648, 650, 652, 654, 656,  
 658, 660, 662, 664, 666, 668, 670,  
 672, 674, 676, 678, 680, 682, 684,  
 686, 688, 690, 692, 694, 696, 698,  
 700, 702, 704, 706, 708, 710, 712,  
 714, 716, 718, 720, 722, 724, 726,  
 728, 730, 732, 734, 736, 738, 740,  
 742, 744, 746, 748, 750, 752, 754,  
 756, 758, 760, 762, 764, 766, 768,  
 770, 772, 774, 776, 778, 780, 782,  
 784, 786, 788, 790, 792, 794, 796,  
 798, 800, 802, 804, 806, 808, 810,  
 812, 814, 816, 818, 820, 822, 824,  
 826, 828, 830, 832, 834, 836, 838,  
 840, 842, 844, 846, 848, 850, 852,  
 854, 856, 858, 860, 862, 864, 866,  
 868, 870, 872, 874, 876, 878, 880,  
 882, 884, 886, 888, 890, 892, 894,  
 896, 898, 900, 902, 904, 906, 908,  
 910, 912, 914, 916, 918, 920, 922,  
 924, 926, 928, 930, 932, 934, 936,  
 938, 940, 942, 944, 946, 948, 950,  
 952, 954, 956, 958, 960, 962, 964,  
 966, 968, 970, 972, 974, 976, 978,  
 980, 982, 984, 986, 988, 990, 992,  
 994, 996, 998, 1000, 1002, 1004,  
 1006, 1008, 1010, 1012, 1014, 1016,  
 1018, 1020, 1022, 1024, 1026, 1028,  
 1030, 1032, 1034, 1036, 1038, 1040,  
 1042, 1044, 1046, 1048, 1050, 1052,  
 1054, 1056, 1058, 1060, 1062, 1064,  
 1066, 1068, 1070, 1072, 1074, 1076,  
 1078, 1080, 1082, 1084, 1086, 1088,  
 1090, 1092, 1094, 1096, 1098, 1100,  
 1102, 1104, 1106, 1108, 1110, 1112,  
 1114, 1116, 1118, 1120, 1122, 1124, 1126,  
 1128, 1130, 1132, 1134, 1136, 1138,  
 1140, 1142, 1144, 1146, 1148, 1150,  
 1152, 1154, 1156, 1158, 1160, 1162,  
 1164, 1166, 1168, 1170, 1172, 1174,  
 1176, 1178, 1180, 1182, 1184, 1186,  
 1188, 1190, 1192, 1194, 1196, 1198,  
 1200, 1202, 1204, 1206, 1208, 1210,  
 1212, 1214, 1216, 1218, 1220, 1222,  
 1224, 1226, 1228, 1230, 1232, 1234,  
 1236, 1238, 1240, 1242, 1244, 1246,  
 1248, 1250, 1252, 1254, 1256, 1258,  
 1260, 1262, 1264, 1266, 1268, 1270,  
 1272, 1274, 1276, 1278, 1280, 1282,  
 1284, 1286, 1288, 1290, 1292, 1294,  
 1296, 1298, 1300, 1302, 1304, 1306,  
 1308, 1310, 1312, 1314, 1316, 1318,  
 1320, 1322, 1324, 1326, 1328, 1330,  
 1332, 1334, 1336, 1338, 1340, 1342,  
 1344, 1346, 1348, 1350, 1352, 1354,  
 1356, 1358, 1360, 1362, 1364, 1366,  
 1368, 1370, 1372, 1374, 1376, 1378,  
 1380, 1382, 1384, 1386, 1388, 1390,  
 1392, 1394, 1396, 1398, 1400, 1402,  
 1404, 1406, 1408, 1410, 1412, 1414,  
 1416, 1418, 1420, 1422, 1424, 1426,  
 1428, 1430, 1432, 1434, 1436, 1438,  
 1440, 1442, 1444, 1446, 1448, 1450,  
 1452, 1454, 1456, 1458, 1460, 1462,  
 1464, 1466, 1468, 1470, 1472, 1474,  
 1476, 1478, 1480, 1482, 1484, 1486,  
 1488, 1490, 1492, 1494, 1496, 1498,  
 1500, 1502, 1504, 1506, 1508, 1510,  
 1512, 1514, 1516, 1518, 1520, 1522,  
 1524, 1526, 1528, 1530, 1532, 1534,  
 1536, 1538, 1540, 1542, 1544, 1546,  
 1548, 1550, 1552, 1554, 1556, 1558,  
 1560, 1562, 1564, 1566, 1568, 1570,  
 1572, 1574, 1576, 1578, 1580, 1582,  
 1584, 1586, 1588, 1590, 1592, 1594,  
 1596, 1598, 1600, 1602, 1604, 1606,  
 1608, 1610, 1612, 1614, 1616, 1618,  
 1620, 1622, 1624, 1626, 1628, 1630,  
 1632, 1634, 1636, 1638, 1640, 1642,  
 1644, 1646, 1648, 1650, 1652, 1654,  
 1656, 1658, 1660, 1662, 1664, 1666,  
 1668, 1670, 1672, 1674, 1676, 1678,  
 1680, 1682, 1684, 1686, 1688, 1690,  
 1692, 1694, 1696, 1698, 1700, 1702,  
 1704, 1706, 1708, 1710, 1712, 1714,  
 1716, 1718, 1720, 1722, 1724, 1726,  
 1728, 1730, 1732, 1734, 1736, 1738,  
 1740, 1742, 1744, 1746, 1748, 1750,  
 1752, 1754, 1756, 1758, 1760, 1762,  
 1764, 1766, 1768, 1770, 1772, 1774,  
 1776, 1778, 1780, 1782, 1784, 1786,  
 1788, 1790, 1792, 1794, 1796, 1798,  
 1800, 1802, 1804, 1806, 1808, 1810,  
 1812, 1814, 1816, 1818, 1820, 1822,  
 1824, 1826, 1828, 1830, 1832, 1834,  
 1836, 1838, 1840, 1842, 1844, 1846,  
 1848, 1850, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1858,  
 1860, 1862, 1864, 1866, 1868, 1870,  
 1872, 1874, 1876, 1878, 1880, 1882,  
 1884, 1886, 1888, 1890, 1892, 1894,  
 1896, 1898, 1900, 1902, 1904, 1906,  
 1908, 1910, 1912, 1914, 1916, 1918,  
 1920, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1928, 1930,  
 1932, 1934, 1936, 1938, 1940, 1942,  
 1944, 1946, 1948, 1950, 1952, 1954,  
 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964, 1966,  
 1968, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978,  
 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990,  
 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002,  
 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014,  
 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2024, 2026,  
 2028, 2030, 2032, 2034, 2036, 2038,  
 2040, 2042, 2044, 2046, 2048, 2050,  
 2052, 2054, 2056, 2058, 2060, 2062,  
 2064, 2066, 2068, 2070, 2072, 2074,  
 2076, 2078, 2080, 2082, 2084, 2086,  
 2088, 2090, 2092, 2094, 2096, 2098,  
 2100, 2102, 2104, 2106, 2108, 2110,  
 2112, 2114, 2116, 2118, 2120, 2122,  
 2124, 2126, 2128, 2130, 2132, 2134,  
 2136, 2138, 2140, 2142, 2144, 2146,  
 2148, 2150, 2152, 2154, 2156, 2158,  
 2160, 2162, 2164, 2166, 2168, 2170,  
 2172, 2174, 2176, 2178, 2180, 2182,  
 2184, 2186, 2188, 2190, 2192, 2194,  
 2196, 2198, 2200, 2202, 2204, 2206,  
 2208, 2210, 2212, 2214, 2216, 2218,  
 2220, 2222, 2224, 2226, 2228, 2230,  
 2232, 2234, 2236, 2238, 2240, 2242,  
 2244, 2246, 2248, 2250, 2252, 2254,  
 2256, 2258, 2260, 2262, 2264, 2266,  
 2268, 2270, 2272, 2274, 2276, 2278,  
 2280, 2282, 2284, 2286, 2288, 2290,  
 2292, 2294, 2296, 2298, 2300, 2302,  
 2304, 2306, 2308, 2310, 2312, 2314,  
 2316, 2318, 2320, 2322, 2324, 2326,  
 2328, 2330, 2332, 2334, 2336, 2338,  
 2340, 2342, 2344, 2346, 2348, 2350,  
 2352, 2354, 2356, 2358, 2360, 2362,  
 2364, 2366, 2368, 2370, 2372, 2374,  
 2376, 2378, 2380, 2382, 2384, 2386,  
 2388, 2390, 2392, 2394, 2396, 2398,  
 2400, 2402, 2404, 2406, 2408, 2410,  
 2412, 2414, 2416, 2418, 2420, 2422,  
 2424, 2426, 2428, 2430, 2432, 2434,  
 2436, 2438, 2440, 2442, 2444, 2446,  
 2448, 2450, 2452, 2454, 2456, 2458,  
 2460, 2462, 2464, 2466, 2468, 2470,  
 2472, 2474, 2476, 2478, 2480, 2482,  
 2484, 2486, 2488, 2490, 2492, 2494,  
 2496, 2498, 2500, 2502, 2504, 2506,  
 2508, 2510, 2512, 2514, 2516, 2518,  
 2520, 2522, 2524, 2526, 2528, 2530,  
 2532, 2534, 2536, 2538, 2540, 2542,  
 2544, 2546, 2548, 2550, 2552, 2554,  
 2556, 2558, 2560, 2562, 2564, 2566,  
 2568, 2570, 2572, 2574, 2576, 2578,  
 2580, 2582, 2584, 2586, 2588, 2590,  
 2592, 2594, 2596, 2598, 2600, 2602,  
 2604, 2606, 2608, 2610, 2612, 2614,  
 2616, 2618, 2620, 2622, 2624, 2626,  
 2628, 2630, 2632, 2634, 2636, 2638,  
 2640, 2642, 2644, 2646, 2648, 2650,  
 2652, 2654, 2656, 2658, 2660, 2662,  
 2664, 2666, 2668, 2670, 2672, 2674,  
 2676, 2678, 2680, 2682, 2684, 2686,  
 2688, 2690, 2692, 2694, 2696, 2698,  
 2700, 2702, 2704, 2706, 2708, 2710,  
 2712, 2714, 2716, 2718, 2720, 2722,  
 2724, 2726, 2728, 2730, 2732, 2734,  
 2736, 2738, 2740, 2742, 2744, 2746,  
 2748, 2750, 2752, 2754, 2756, 2758,  
 2760, 2762, 2764, 2766, 2768, 2770,  
 2772, 2774, 2776, 2778, 2780, 2782,  
 2784, 2786, 2788, 2790, 2792, 2794,  
 2796, 2798, 2800, 2802, 2804, 2806,  
 2808, 2810, 2812, 2814, 2816, 2818,  
 2820, 2822, 2824, 2826, 2828, 2830,  
 2832, 2834, 2836, 2838, 2840, 2842,  
 2844, 2846, 2848, 2850, 2852, 2854,  
 2856, 2858, 2860, 2862, 2864, 2866,  
 2868, 2870, 2872, 2874, 2876, 2878,  
 2880, 2882, 2884, 2886, 2888, 2890,  
 2892, 2894, 2896, 2898, 2900, 2902,  
 2904, 2906, 2908, 2910, 2912, 2914,  
 2916, 2918, 2920, 2922, 2924, 2926,  
 2928, 2930, 2932, 2934, 2936, 2938,  
 2940, 2942, 2944, 2946, 2948, 2950,  
 2952, 2954, 2956, 2958, 2960, 2962,  
 2964, 2966, 2968, 2970, 2972, 2974,  
 2976, 2978, 2980, 2982, 2984, 2986,  
 2988, 2990, 2992, 2994, 2996, 2998,  
 3000, 3002, 3004, 3006, 3008, 3010,  
 3012, 3014, 3016, 3018, 3020, 3022,  
 3024, 3026, 3028, 3030, 3032, 3034,  
 3036, 3038, 3040, 3042, 3044, 3046,  
 3048, 3050, 3052, 3054, 3056, 3058,  
 3060, 3062, 3064, 3066, 3068, 3070,  
 3072, 3074, 3076, 3078, 3080, 3082,  
 3084, 3086, 3088, 3090, 3092, 3094,  
 3096, 3098, 3100, 3102, 3104, 3106,  
 3108, 3110, 3112, 3114, 3116, 3118,  
 3120, 3122, 3124, 3126, 3128, 3130,  
 3132, 3134, 3136, 3138, 3140, 3142,  
 3144, 3146, 3148, 3150, 3152, 3154,  
 3156, 3158, 3160, 3162, 3164, 3166,  
 3168, 3170, 3172, 3174, 3176, 3178,  
 3180, 3182, 3184, 3186, 3188, 3190,  
 3192, 3194, 3196, 3198, 3200, 3202,  
 3204, 3206, 3208, 3210, 3212, 3214,  
 3216, 3218, 3220, 3222, 3224, 3226,  
 3228, 3230, 3232, 3234, 3236, 3238,  
 3240, 3242, 3244, 3246, 3248, 3250,  
 3252, 3254, 3256, 3258, 3260, 3262,  
 3264, 3266, 3268, 3270, 3272, 3274,  
 3276, 3278, 3280, 3282, 3284, 3286,  
 3288, 3290, 3292, 3294, 3296, 3298,  
 3300,



**METHUEN**  
 Methuen & Co Ltd  
 11 New Fetter Lane  
 London EC4P 4PE

 Methuen Inc  
 711 Third Avenue  
 New York NY 10017

## Problems of British Economic Policy 1870-1945

JIM TOMLINSON

Most historical accounts of economic policy set out to describe the way in which governments have attempted to solve their economic problems and to achieve their economic objectives. Jim Tomlinson, however, focuses on the problems themselves, arguing that the way in which areas of economic policy become 'problems' for policy makers is always itself problematic, that it is never obvious and never happens 'naturally'.

176 pages  
 Hardback 0 416 30430 3 £8.50 \$21.00  
 Paperback 0 416 30440 0 £3.95 \$10.95

## Second Edition An Atlas of Irish History

RUTH DUDLEY EDWARDS

This second edition of a well-established textbook will be welcomed by teachers as well as by students of Irish history. It outlines the history of Ireland from the earliest times to the present day in visual form, with a full complementary text. Political, economic and military aspects are given a new dimension by the skilful use of visual material, while aspects that are rarely covered in any depth outside specialist works, such as social change, are given extensive and illuminating treatment.

288 pages, illustrated  
 Hardback 0 416 74820 1 £8.50 \$19.95  
 Paperback 0 416 74050 2 £3.95 \$9.50

## Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society

Edited by MICHAEL DEAR and ALLEN J. SCOTT

The poverty of previous explanations of today's urban crisis is demonstrated by Dear and Scott's excellent collection of papers that brings together and synthesizes current discussion about various critical approaches to the urban question, attempting to define a general theory of urbanization and urban planning in capitalist society. Its breadth, its coherence and the excellence of its international range of authors will make this collection an indispensable student reference.

648 pages  
 Hardback 0 416 74640 3 £15.00 \$24.95  
 Paperback 0 416 74650 0 £7.50 \$14.95

## Politics, Geography and Behaviour

RICHARD MUIR and RONAN PADDISON

This is the first purpose-built textbook to interpret political themes in the context of human geography. The authors integrate contemporary research and teaching interests into a coherent political and geographical framework. Subjects discussed include decision-making and policy formation, perception, voting and elections, politics and 'the environment', the allocation of public goods and international behaviour.

240 pages, illustrated  
 Hardback 0 416 31330 2 £10.00 \$27.50  
 Paperback 0 416 31340 X £4.95 \$12.95

## Unemployment

Edited by BERNARD CRICK

Mass unemployment has returned with a vengeance but has been greeted with complacency by successive governments. This collection of essays, originally published in *The Political Quarterly*, seeks to challenge that complacency by describing the damage that is being done to the community and the economy at national and regional level as a result of government policy.

160 pages  
 Paperback 0 416 32470 3 £2.50 \$5.95

## Applications of Conditioning Theory

Edited by GRAHAM DAVEY

Psychology in Progress

Concepts of conditioning have been fundamental to the development of experimental psychology and have always been deeply controversial. Recent attempts to apply the theoretical principles to a broad range of human problems have been equally controversial, and it is the role of this book to describe and evaluate them.

204 pages  
 Hardback 0 416 73560 6 £10.50 \$22.95  
 Paperback 0 416 73770 3 £4.95 \$10.95

## THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

SEPTEMBER 11 1981

### contents

J. R. VINCENT ION STALLWORTHY MICHAEL HOWARD	Tony Benn: Arguments for Democracy Making a bed (poem) Richard Buckle: The Most Upsetting Woman	1023-24
PAUL BAILEY	Isak Dinesen: Letters from Africa 1914-1931	1025
JANET MORGAN	Mari Prichard (Compiler): Guests and Hosts Jeanne Mackenzie (Compiler): Cycling Claire Tomalin (Compiler): Parents and Children Theodore Fitzgibbon (Compiler): The Pleasures of the Table	1026
MARILYN BUTLER DONALD OREENE	Grevel Lindop: The Oplum-Eater - A Life of Thomas De Quincey Brian McCrea: Henry Fielding and the Politics of Mid-Eighteenth-Century England	1027-28
PAUL ADDISON	David Carlton: Anthony Eden - A Biography	1030
CAROL RUMENS DAVID NOKES LINDA TAYLOR	Fiction Deryl Bainbridge: A Weekend with Claude Bernice Rubens: Drifts of Passage Mory Hoeking: March House	1031
CRAIG BROWN STUART SUTHERLAND	Taki/Jeffrey Bernard: High Life Low Life Michael Bentine: The Door Marked Summer. Smith & Son Removers	1032
JASPER RIDLEY W. F. BYNUM	Wendy Hinder: Castlereagh Michael Rose: Curator of the Dead - Thomas Hodgkin (1798-1866)	1033
NICHOLAS SHRIMPTON DAVID ALEXANDER	Commentary Patrick Caulfield: Paintings 1963-81 (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool) The Fall of Zion: Nonconformist architecture in Yorkshire and Lancashire (Cliff Castle, Kettleby)	
STODDARD MARTIN	Mike Weller: Loose Ends (Hampstead Theatre)	
PETER BRANSCOMBE EDWIN MORGAN	Theatre in Edinburgh Nestor/Tom Stoppard: On the Razzle (National Theatre Company) Dostoevsky/Richard Crane: The Brothers Karamazov (Brighton Theatre Company)	
HERMIONE LEE	Candida: As You Like It (Birmingham Repertory Company)	
JOHN STURROCK	Denis Donoghue: S/S/S: Structures, Systems, Signs (BBC Radio 3)	
	Among this week's contributors	1034-36
	To the Editor	1037
LINDSAY DUGUID T. J. BINYON RICHARD COMBS STODDARD MARTIN JULIA BRIGGS	Fiction Louis Auchincloss: The Cat and the King Ed McBain: Rumpelstiltskin Doris Grumbach: The Missing Person Joseph Delaney: The Sins of the Fathers Brian Coffey: The Voice of the Night	1038
DENNIS H. WRONO	Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill and Bryon S. Turner: The Dominant Ideology Thesis	1039
CYRIL EHRLICH T. C. BARKER	P. T. Bauer: Equality, the Third World and Economic Delusion Sidney Pollard: Peaceful Conquest - The Industrialization of Europe 1760-1970	1040
DOUGLAS JOHNSON	Christopher Charle: Les Hauts fonctionnaires en France au XIX <sup>e</sup> siècle Guy Thuillier: Bureaucratie et Bureaucrates en France au XIX <sup>e</sup> siècle Maurice Agulhon: Marianne into Battle - Republican Imagery and symbolism in France, 1789-1880	1041
D. C. WATT J. A. THOMPSON	Robert A. Divine: Eisenhower and the Cold War Inga Fjotir: Colonel House in Paris - A Study of American Policy at the Paris Peace Conference 1919 Autumn Notes (poem)	1042
GEORGE BACOVIA	Andrew Harvey: A Full Circle Leonard Clark: The Way It Was Robbo Skellon: The Collected Shorter Poems 1947-1977 Louis Simpson: A Company of Poets Philip Levine: Don't Ask Richard Kostelanetz: The Old Poetries and the New	1043
TIM DOOLEY	Martin Butler: The Paintings and Drawings of William Blake Geoffrey Beard: Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England 1660-1820 Fragments from Greek and Roman Architecture	1044
MICHAEL MASON J. MORDAUNT CROOK	Norman Sanders, Richard Southern, T. W. Craik and Lois Potter: The Revels History of Drama in English. Volume II, 1500-1576. Glynne Wickham: Early English Stages 1390 to 1660. Volume Three, Plays and their Makers to 1576 In the Dark (poem)	1045-46
ROBIN MIDDLETON	Alfred Guzzetti: Two or Three Things I Know about Her Ian Watson: Conversations with Ayckbourn Richard Findlater (Editor): At the Royal Court	
PAULA NEUSS	Fiction Kate Lazar: Forever After John Canaan: Stranger to Sereno Commentary Escape to Victory (Odeon Cinema, Leicester Square) A conference on the Edinburgh Fringe	1047

# A manifesto for marginals

By J. R. Vincent

TONY BENN  
 Arguments for Democracy  
 Edited by Chris Mullin  
 257pp. Jonathan Cope. £6.95.  
 0 224 01878 7

This book is based upon speeches, lectures, and articles written or delivered in the two years up to April 1981; in other words, on bits and pieces. Yet the text has far more unity than such a description might suggest, and compliments may reasonably go to the editor, a *Times* journalist, for a pleasing professionalism. A point to watch is that this is a companion volume to the author's *Arguments for Socialism* (1979) which covered his speeches of 1975-79. Not since Mr Gladstone's Midlothian days have the ephemera of the platform been so lovingly garnered.

And with reason. Mr Benn is rather good at this sort of thing. He has a touch ten times lighter than that of Dr Owen. He is ten times less depressingly minded than Shirley Williams (I refer of course, in each case, to their recent books). He has the expository zeal of Mr Powell. In fact, although he has some reputation as an administrator who rarely puts a foot wrong, he makes curiously little reference to his official experience. But if he travels light where knowledge is concerned his range of ideas is quite unusually wide, probably wider than that of anyone else in his own party. Some would say the ideas are not his own; that he is a ready borrower from young graduates and young journalists; but his receptiveness to fashion is surely partly to his credit. Benn's political practice might get us into difficulties because it is not as good as other people's practice; but his ideas certainly cannot be dismissed by some sweeping reference to a supposed stock of better and wiser ideas held out to us by other politicians, for no such stock exists.

His book falls into two parts. The first, on "The Power of the Establishment", diagnoses the British disease. Britain is no democracy. We are the last liberated colony. We have a premiership that is really a dictatorship. The civil service has great and uncontrolled power; democratic control of science raises great issues; the press is in the hands of the press lords. The story loses nothing in the telling, but when Mr Benn tells us that power lies with the powerful, he will not find many to contend against him. Democracy in this country has indeed been the figment, out of capitalism on its own, but of a constitutional state with a powerful executive government that has deep historic roots in various élites, classes, and institutions. When Benn, ever voyaging on strange seas of thought, goes a little further and asks if this is not frightfully unfair, the answer all sensible men have always given is that of course it is. Bagehot a hundred years ago gave the answers; now Benn supplies the questions.

In the second part of the book, "The Way Ahead", the author both surveys the heavens and prescribes medicine. He deals with the relations between Christianity and socialism, the future of the trades unions, the need for Labour Party democracy, defence, the re-ordering of Europe, and the transition to democratic socialism. Apart from economic questions, which are too sedulously avoided, here is plenty indeed, a truly prime-ministerial abundance of great thoughts. Before examining Benn's latest positions in detail - and they are not what one might think let us note that the book generally represents a move to the right, an attempt to reassure something which Benn does well. It is not a socialist book. Our old friend, the working class, simply does not appear under that name. The emphasis is on class collaboration, not class conflict. The appeal is to the soft centre, whether it be in the author's constituency, which became marginal in 1979, or to the great hazy heart of

the trades unions on whom Mr Benn's career now depends, or to what Lord Blake resonantly calls the moral anxieties of a prosperous intelligentsia.

Mr Benn's left-wing phase began in 1970, when the election defeat suddenly removed him from the role of the prime minister's bright young man. Before 1970 he went through reformist and technocratic phases which lasted at least as long as his present mood. After 1970 he saw correctly that there was a left-wing ladder to the top waiting to be climbed and that he was the only person around with sufficient standing to climb it. Over ten years he has got the Left to commit itself to him, without committing himself in any very definite way to the Left. His change to "Tony Benn" is also thought locally to coincide with a swing to the left in his constituency party. But his remarkable power to absorb has its limitations. He can soak up successive radical fashions among the middle classes and the young. He is a great success with the deferential working class. He is a success with proletarian militants who operate rather like student politicians. But he has far less appeal to Labour voters than Denis Healey, and justly so, for Benn represents an essentially middle-class radicalism, and he appears to know next to nothing of marxist ideas.

Mr Benn's lack of marxist analysis may be stupid, but it is not purely tactical. It stems from his roots in an older tradition. He is, as he is at pains to stress, a time-traveller from a bygone age, that of the great Edwardian conflict of Peers v People. This is where Benn feels at home; or so his rhetoric of the moment would have us believe. To understand his vision of the world, we had better read, not Marx, but H. G. Wells's picture of the Liberal Party in *The New Machiavelli*, as "a system of hostilities and objections that somehow achieves at times an elusive common soul". We have in Benn an updated version of socialism's oldest enemy, bourgeois liberalism. The emotions are left as the hills. Benn scents danger in the swish of emcee, as Ian Paisley does in the swish of a soutane. The army that Benn leads, the army of the marginal, the grand coalition of blacks, gays, women, ecologists, Irish, CND, and the militant lumpen-intelligentsia, may perfectly well turn into a historic force - the *Guardian* made flesh, as it were. Even so, it would be as far from a marxian class as one can be; not necessarily

an objection in the eyes of ambitious sentimental young graduates playing at Young England. But if I were a member of the Militant Tendency, I should be studying the careers of Ramsay MacDonald and Harold Wilson with anxious care, and viewing with concern Benn's appeals to "far-minded people in all parties, and in none", his hopes of reawakening "rural radicalism" in "battles against the squiresarchy" and his concern for small businessmen.

Mr Benn will, of course, have to rid himself of an entourage, some comically rabid, some like Mr Meacher, quintessentially sincere sentimentalists, and most of them rather too obviously graduates, before he can reveal himself as a sheep in sheep's clothing. He will know that, as previous premiers have found, it is easier to acquire an entourage than to lose one, but bearing in mind the deftness with which he shed his former skin as chairman of the Fabian Society (1965-66), he should not despair. Those of us who merely read the press have been poorly served here, for journalists have offered abuse which explains nothing, whereas Benn needs to be explained, more than with most politicians, in terms of those around him, as an old man who is willing to listen to the articulate young. A major politician is not a journalist, but a group of people. Our journalists will not name him, will not explain to us that politicians sail at the head of little squadrons as under George III. For all Benn's complaints about the media, the fierce light that beats upon Muckel does not intrude upon Holland Park.

Failing other evidence, one might conclude from this text alone that Benn was in the hands of a select group of intimates, rather like Hugh Gaitskell's Frugal group. The lot of the northern aristocrat does not obtrude largely. Benn is at his most Bennish when he resembles an issue of *Time* Out, when he runs fast to keep up with E. P. Thompson, when he echoes metropolitan graduate conservatism, when he condemns "shallow materialism", he offers the excitement of asceticism to the privileged, to those who have something to give up; in other words, not to the Labour voters of the north. When he turns to preach a socially conscious Christianity, he is again making the assumption of a middle-class audience. When he talks of the dangers of a military coup, when he denounces the feudal trappings of the constitution, he is talking the language of the class of '68. He is

the preacher of metaphysical woes to men with full stomachs. (He has very little to say on inflation.) When he compares the successes of the gold speculator to the hardships of the steelworker, it is not the hardships suffered that worry him, but the immorality of the success enjoyed. (It is also "an insult to many thousands of small businessmen.") This is puritanism, not proletarianism. Benn does not put the working class first, and he seems, in this book, to have dropped his former flag from his masthead, about an irreversible transfer of wealth and power to working people. At any rate, that phrase no longer appears.

Mr Benn puts his own family tradition first. The key to his character is that he has never rebelled. It is a hereditary figure, just as Shirley Williams and Michael Foot are hereditary figures. They honour everything for which their parents stood (in Benn's case this includes a religious mother as well as a political father). Benn's claim to a Christian foundation for his beliefs must be taken seriously. Though confirmed as an Anglican when at his public school, Westminster, he now presents himself as a "student of the teachings of the historical Jesus - and I lay claim to be such a student and no more..." who finds a "revolutionary" meaning in "loving thy neighbour as thyself", and while somewhat coy about his own position, points to the bridge, a rather long one it seems, linking the teachings of Jesus with the Peasants' Revolt, the Levellers, the Chartists, ecology, democracy, internationalism, and the closed shop. This grey area between liberal protestantism and secular humanism may lack something in intellect, but if Benn is in error here, he has much of official religion with him.

To sully these pages with gross plagiarism, Jesus is presented, in Muggeridge's term, as the Labour member for Galilee South. The action of the Good Samaritan is identified with the socialist postscript, when the reverse is true. The Samaritan, far from seeking generic social services, tried to substitute charity for collectivism. Indeed, by paying the innkeeper twopence from his own pocket, he was positively inciting Herod to reduce social service budgets still further. The Good Samaritan, far from being a forerunner of Beveridge, was breaking a very rule in the book.

Jesus was no better when it comes to the liberal catechism of today. He was not the Harriet Beecher Stowe

of the first century. He offered no structural solution to the problem of the oppressed Samaritan minority; indeed, even the story of the Good Samaritan has racist overtones. It is like a story about an intelligent Irishman, or generous Scot; it implies the opposite can be taken as normal. On slavery, Jesus was sound (he not against it), like all good and wise men, including, as far as one can see, slaves, until very recently. The building up of Jesus as a forerunner of secular liberal collectivism creaks. So does the cant use of "Am I my brother's keeper?" as if it were a biblical injunction to trade unionism. For, first, it treats an interrogative as if it were an imperative, which is a simple inability to read; and, secondly, the question proceeds not from high authority, but from Cain, a murderer and therefore a debatable source of advice even on trade-union questions.

The liberal or democratic socialist Jesus, never credible at serious levels, is now absurd even at popular levels, because the points considered vital by liberalism and social democracy have changed so greatly in recent decades. None of this will stop Mr Benn presenting himself as "a socialist whose political commitment owes more to the teachings of Jesus - without the mysteries within which they are presented - than to the writings of Marx..." My brand of socialism derives from Christian teaching. I was confirmed as an Anglican, but as I have got older the mystery, the ritual and the organization of the church have been less interesting to me. Benn calls out for Christians "to speak up loud and clear against monetarism and militarism... Britain too now needs a liberation theology..." In Britain today Christians have a key role in determining the final outcome of the argument about the future pattern of power. Benn's lightness of touch in occupying the middle ground between belief and unbelief, in touching on exactly the right current concerns in Christian and especially clerical thought, in presenting himself as the heir of the Christian centuries, shows an instinct for representing contro opinion which we (and the Militant Tendency) would be foolish to dismiss.

Benn's flair for grasping the workings of the ordinary mind comes out in his handling of the House of Lords. It is too sufficient to say that its abolition, however trivial, would serve Labour well, as the issue that divides the party least (as with Gladstone's Irish Church disestablishment in 1868); or that it would probably push the Tories into embarrassment; or that Benn has still ringing in his ears his first great success, in retaining his seat on inheriting his father's title. No; it is that, living in a society where progress is supposed to drop like manna and very rarely does, it can at least be seen that the Tory majority in the Upper House does, occasionally, block Labour measures. There are a hundred and one other reasons why Labour manifestos remain unexamined; but none so visible as the House of Lords. Benn therefore speaks for popular prejudice when he says the Upper House must go; but how he will miss it when it has gone.

Curiously, Benn has already struck a giant blow against democracy. He may abolish the Lords, which will not matter, but he will also put the monarchy back in business, which will matter very much. So long as we had an apparently indestructible two-party system, one could assume that the monarchy would remain decorative. But if, to accommodate Benn, we are to have a multi-party system with a period of hung parliaments and great confusion, then the head of state has in effect to create majorities where the electorate has failed. Mr Benn, being wise to his generation, says nothing which might impact future relations. While writing little homilies on democracy, he is in fact ensuring that Charles III. will have to make more important decisions than any monarch since

## Making a bed

for Jill after twenty years

"We have here three sorts of bed"  
 (Plato, *The Republic*)

God made the first - in a dreamwork-shop behind the bicycle lamp on the ooc of the carpenter from Minsk. Straight from the snows of childhood, it came to a jingling stop.

Take off the runners and there you are: curved footboard, scalloped for reins, curved headboard, created and carved with balsa - a bed fit for a tsar and tsarina. The carpenter took wood and under his gauging thumb it grew towards the trolls-bed that you and I tested and found good.

So why make another? A spare bed may have its use: as when one, at the end of a day, having eaten and done the dishes, remembers the other head on the other pillow, and can resume the broken journey, riding to sleep, breathing in union, breathing deep, twin plumes braided in a single plume.

Jon Stallworthy











De Quincey's case there are no short cuts, since the writing is often self-governing, hard to edit and even harder to falsify. At one point Lindop tries to distinguish between the journalist and the artist - only when De Quincey wrote as the latter was he "in quest of the meaning of his life" - but there isn't always support for this distinction in De Quincey's own writing. No wonder. He was nothing if not a journalist: virtually everything was written for immediate publication in a magazine. Like Lamb and Hazlitt, he capitalized on the sudden shift in public taste after the alarms and controversies of 1818-20, when Colburn's attacks on Old Corruption had constituted the model of great journalism.

In the decade that followed, the subjects that earned most *reclame* were personal - the writer himself, his memories, the people he had known and the books he had read. De Quincey developed two techniques, which stood him in good stead through a career which far outlasted those of his two closest rivals. He could appropriate learned material, on topics as diverse as the galaxies, the Chinese War and political economy, where he was commonly dependent on someone else's books. This method had the disadvantage of betraying him into mistakes or simplifications, as well as downright dullness, and it also laid him open to charges of plagiarism. Alternatively he "objectified" private material, writing about his own dreams and memories as illustrations of general laws of psychology. In the latter case comes his account of how he succumbed to opium addiction. *The Confessions*, which he claimed as a contribution to the understanding of addiction and of the psychology of dreaming. The two categories were not distinct for De Quincey, who was, like Coleridge, an unsystematic polymath, very proud of the range of his learning. He could justify his preoccupation with himself on the same grounds as he justified his frankness about Wordsworth. Both topics added to useful knowledge. How invaluable should we all raise the curtain upon Shakespeare's daily life - his habits, tastes, and opinions on contemporary events, books, events in national prospects?

But through De Quincey can pose as a researcher, in his later life especially he seems to have developed a certain contempt for that sort of literalness. In fact, though Lindop does not bring this out, the revised literary values and the theory of writing which he evolved after 1844 must seem for many modern readers by far the most interesting aspect of the Opium-Eater's whole career. *The Confessions* may be selective and unverifiable as autobiographies go, but they remain sufficiently conventional to insure the events of De Quincey's life in a chronological manner, which implies a linear, causative connection between time experienced and the next. Roughly a quarter of a century later, *Suspense de Profundis* and *The English Mail-Coch* are not concerned with consciousness moving through time. De Quincey writes in *Suspense* that the mind is like a palimpsest, a parchment on which a succession of experiences have been imprinted and imperfectly erased; everything is still there waiting to be recovered, in memory, in fantasy or in dream. These late writings dramatically re-enact the normally suppressed past. The effect is quite different from documentary writing, though De Quincey still had some of this to do when he amplified parts of the *Confessions* for the Collected Edition of his writing in 1856. Both enterprises can lay claim to be auto-

biography - but the more exotic manner subverts the common autobiographical mode.

De Quincey's growing impatience with literalness became explicit after he wrote a fanciful essay on "The System of the Heavens" (1841). According to De Quincey, the nebula which he had seen through the telescope of his astronomer friend John Pringle Nichol was the head of a demon, full of "brutalities, unspeakable". When, a few years later, he was preparing to re-publish the article, Nichol pointed out in evident embarrassment that further work with a more powerful telescope had settled the mystery of the nebula, not in De Quincey's favour. De Quincey thought it absurd that anyone else's explanation should be thought to have a bearing on his: "That a new stage of progress has altered the appearances, as doubtless further stages will alter them, concerns me nothing. . . . Nichol apparently misunderstood the case as though it required a real phenomenon for its basis." He had offered one explanation; let scientists offer another. All such constructs were independent of "reality" which, if it had objective existence at all, was unknowable.

At its most characteristic, De Quincey's late style is self-conscious, ornate and mannered; a structuralist might praise it for thus proclaiming that it has no status except as writing. But De Quincey can use a quite different tactic, as he does in a brilliant piece of "rapportage", the Truman Capote-like re-living of two miss-murders committed by one John Williams in 1811, which he appended to his tiresomely facetious *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*. Or he can employ his high style and still tangle intriguingly with documentation, as he does in "Going

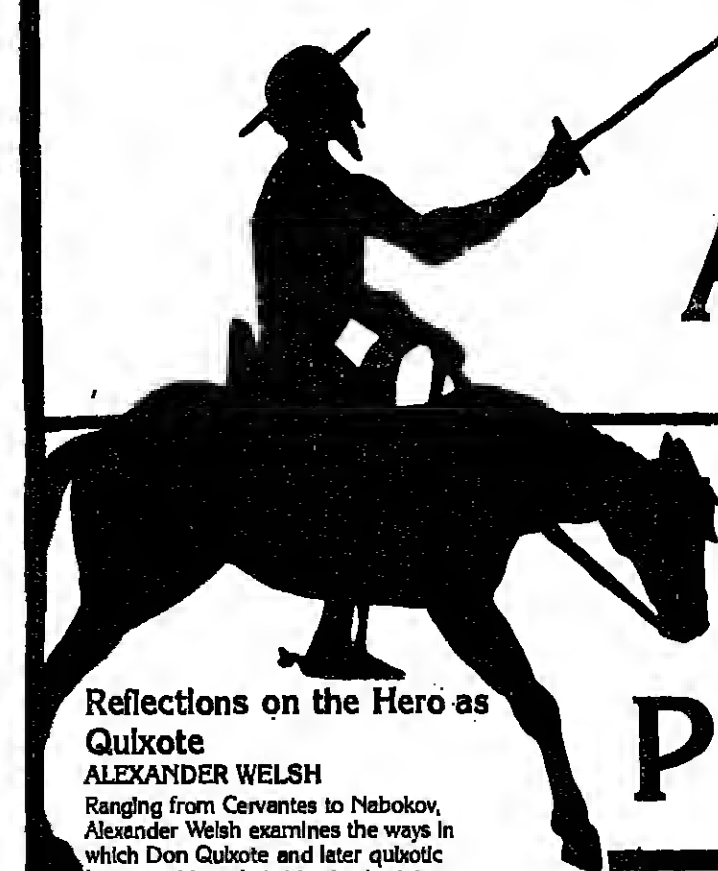
Down with the Victory", one of the confessional parts of *The English Mail-Coch*, which claims to describe his memories of carrying the news of the Battle of Talavera through the countryside. "It comes as a surprise to realise," remarks Lindop "that De Quincey had been staying at West-lay [in house his mother took in Somerset] when the news of Talavera reached England early in August 1809, and had not visited London for several weeks." The coachman, with its specific military news, becomes as plain an example of "faction" as the closely documented description of the murders. De Quincey never seems so "real" as when engaged in over-setting the distinction between fact and fiction.

To write the academic biography of such a man is to grasp a snake by the tail. One solution would be to submit to De Quincey's literary values, to write a psychobiography, or merely supplement the imaginative version on the grounds that it can't be supplanted. This is not at all the kind of book Lindop has written. Another response to the problem would be the headmasterly one, of treating De Quincey severely as the notorious liar many of his critics have taken him to be. Lindop has evidently considered this tactic, but in the end it isn't what he does. He compromises by quoting, on perhaps a dozen occasions, one of De Quincey's brilliant but unverifiable descriptions, while he accompanies it with the equivalent of the warning on a packet of cigarettes. In this style we are told, as De Quincey's graphic detail of how, as a teenage runaway, he befriended the prostitute Ann in London; the next paragraph opens, "This touching story is at least possible". We learn as though it is fact that in 1816 or 1817, drugged with laudanum against the

cold, De Quincey found himself on the box of a coach beside a sleeping coachman as they thundered towards a gig in their path. Then, "we have only De Quincey's account of this event, which may, of course, be pure fantasy". Elsewhere, seemingly tall stories emerge without the caution. The claim, for example, that De Quincey would have got a stupendously good Oxford degree had he not failed to turn up on the final day sounds as if it could be one we've heard before.

Controversy over De Quincey's veracity began with reviews of the *Confessions*. An account of these and other contemporary challenges, and of De Quincey's reactions, would have helped to establish Lindop's independence of his chief source. It would also have been more wary to give the dates of those writings by De Quincey cited in the references - rather than volume and page in the Masson Collected Edition - so that the reader might know at what stage in his life De Quincey was "remembering" something. Without these precautions, Lindop seems not quite alert enough, and sometimes even a step or two behind his subject. He ends his account of a complicated life with an ingenious summing-up of De Quincey's character - "lovable and oddly heroic" - and literary achievement - "Perhaps his most remarkable gift was as a creator of literary portraits - self-portraits as well as portraits of others".

De Quincey would probably have been well satisfied, much of the time, to have been taken at face value. Rebuffed in childhood, he learnt in later life to keep others at a safe distance. He was not really bent on giving access to the public when he entrusted to us, less than candidly, his "Confessions" and "Recollections".



# HEROES AND DREAMERS

## All in Princeton Literature

### Reflections on the Hero as Quixote

ALEXANDER WELSH

Ranging from Cervantes to Nabokov, Alexander Welsh examines the ways in which Don Quixote and later quixotic heroes achieve their identity. In doing so, he asks why the quixotic hero is associated persistently with the cause of justice and why he characteristically falls victim to practical jokes in such novels as Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, Steiner's *Tristram Shandy*, Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers*, Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, and Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and *L'Education sentimentale*. £8.80

### The Reasonable Man

Trollope's Legal Fictions  
CORAL LANSBURY

In a new interpretation of the fiction of Anthony Trollope, Coral Lansbury argues that Trollope's work in the Post Office, starting in 1834, had more influence on his fiction than did any literary figure or tradition. Drawing on her original research in Post Office records, she reveals the ways in which legal forms and legal reasoning shape the language and structure of his novels, all of which involve money and marriage. £9.60

### Closure in the Novel

MARIANNA TORGONOVIC

Drawing on a wide range of 19th and 20th-century English, French, American, and Russian novels, Marianna Torgonovic demonstrates the variety and complexity of the process by which a work reaches an appropriate conclusion. By indicating often unperceived similarities between texts of different historical periods, she not only reveals continuities in the novelistic tradition but also challenges the recent preference for "open" endings. £9.60

### Galdós and the Art of the European Novel, 1867-1887

STEPHEN GILMAN

In this first major study of Spanish novelist Benito Pérez Galdós (1843-1920), Stephen Gilman relates the writer and his work to the 19th-century novel as a genre and traces his artistic growth during a 20-year period, from his initial historical fable, *La Fortuna de Oro*, to his masterpiece, *Fortunata y Jacinta*. £17.40

### Hemingway's Reading, 1910-1940

Commentary and Inventory  
MICHAEL S. REYNOLDS

Michael Reynolds offers an inventory of those books, periodicals, and newspapers that Ernest Hemingway owned or borrowed between 1910 and 1940, and feels that this inventory proves that the writer used his reading to supplement experience when creating *A Farewell to Arms*, *Death in the Afternoon*, *The Green Hills of Africa*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Illus. £10.30

### The Poetics of Indeterminacy

From Rimbaud to Cage  
MARJORIE PERLOFF

There exists a central tradition in modern poetry, argues Marjorie Perloff, that cannot properly be located within the Symbolist tradition that dominated the early 20th century. She traces this tradition from its early "French connection" in the poetry of Rimbaud and Apollinaire to such post-modern "landscapes without depth" as the French/English language constructions of Samuel Beckett. 13 illus. £11.70

### Sounds, Feelings, Thoughts

Seventy Poems by  
WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA

Translated and Introduced by  
MAGNUS J. KRYNSKI and  
ROBERT A. MACIURE

The seventy poems in this bilingual edition are the largest and most representative offering of the work of Polish poet Wisława Szymborska (b. 1923) in any foreign language, with particular emphasis on the period since 1967. They illustrate virtually all of her major themes and most of her important techniques. Here, too, is a recent poem, "Stage Fright," which heretofore has not been included in any collection, Polish or foreign. *Lockert Library of Poetry in Translation*. Bilingual edition. Illus. Cloth, £10.30. Paper, £4.65

### The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London, 1576-1642

ANN JENNALE COOK

For almost half a century scholars have assumed that the major English playwrights wrote primarily for middle-class London folk, if not for a lower class rabble. On the basis of demographic, sociological, and economic evidence in addition to theatrical and literary references to the audience, Ann Jennale Cook shows that, contrary to these assumptions, English Renaissance drama played primarily to a "privileged" clientele. £11.70

### Narrative and Its Discontents

Problems of Closure in the Traditional Novel  
D. A. MILLER

What "discontents" the traditional novel, D. A. Miller contends, is nothing less than its own condition of possibility. He chooses three 19th-century traditional novelists - Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Stendhal - and shows how they share the paradoxical goal of trying to attain an ideal state that is radically at odds with the narrative means they must use to reach it. £11.70

### Coleridge on the Language of Verse

EMERSON R. MARKS

Here an outstanding authority on literary aesthetics offers a fresh interpretation of Coleridge's conception of poetic diction as his most enduring contribution to literary aesthetics. Emerson Marks shows how the poet's rationale was grounded in the mimetic theory that informed his distinction between a copy and an imitation which Coleridge himself labeled "the universal principle of the fine arts." *Princeton Essays in Literature*. £5.55

### The Eye in the Text

Essays on Perception, Mannerist to Modern  
MARY ANN CAWS

Ranging from the English metaphysical poets to our contemporaries, Mary Ann Caws presents a new way of thinking about poetry and its relation to other forms of art, such as painting and film. She studies such figures as Crashaw, Rūke, Brancusi, Mallarmé, Duchamp, Reverdy, Char, Malraux, Bonnefoy, and Jabès against a background of mannerism, baroque, rococo, Dada, surrealism, and symbolism. *Princeton Essays on the Arts*, 11, 62 illus. Cloth, £11.60, Paper, £4.10

### Language and Logos in Boswell's Life of Johnson

WILLIAM C. DOWLING

In the first deconstructionist interpretation of a major 18th-century work, William Dowling analyzes Boswell's *Life of Johnson* as a paradigm of antithetical structure in narrative, and develops a "grammar of discontinuity" for interpreting other texts as well. He looks at the solitary world of Boswell's *Prayers and Meditations*, the world of the great conversation scenes, and a multiplicity of other worlds. £9.30

### The Casuistical Tradition in Shakespeare, Donne, Herbert, and Milton

CAMILLE WELLS SLIGHTS

Camille Slights uses four Shakespearean plays - *Richard III*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*, Donne's *Satires*, Herbert's "The Church," and Milton's *Samson Agonistes* to show that all gave literary form to the problems of conscience that are the province of casuistry. She also examines the work of William Perkins, William Ames, Robert Sanderson, Jeremy Taylor, and Richard Baxter. £12.20

## Interest versus ideology

By Donald Greene

BRIAN MCCREA:  
Henry Fielding and the Politics of Mid-Eighteenth-Century England  
257pp. University of Georgia Press, \$30.  
0 8203 0531 6

Fielding's earliest known political writings are two long fragmentary poems, composed in the late 1720s with the encouragement of his cousin Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in which he sturdily defends Sir Robert Walpole from Pope's attacks, and two short sets of verses addressed to Walpole, somewhat obsequiously in tone and (perhaps whimsically) begging him for a "sinecure". During the 1730s he wrote numerous plays, such as *Pasquin*, which, following the lead of *The Beggar's Opera*, satirize Walpole as a cynical and corrupt politician. In 1739 he became editor, with James Ralph, of the *Cruickman*, one of the chief journals of the opposition to Walpole. Walpole's *Daily Gazetteer* counter-attacked by accusing Fielding of ingratitude - which Fielding in effect admitted, confessing in October 1740, that he had received some gratuity from the "Roberts" for suppressing the publication of a book against him, perhaps *Jonathan Wild, the Great*.

In January 1741 Field brought out *The Venetian*, fiercely attacking Walpole, labelled "Mammon", for supposedly trying to prevent Admiral Vernon, a hero of the opposition, from taking Portobello from the Spanish. But in December 1741, just after Walpole's followers had suffered serious losses in a general election, Fielding published *The Opposition: A Vision*, depicting the new opposition MPs as a motley team of braying asses; the passengers in the wagon they are awkwardly pulling decide to transfer themselves to the comfortable coach of a kindly passing gentleman, obviously Walpole.

The opposition declined to take Fielding's advice and, Walpole resigned two months later, narrowly escaping impeachment. The following year, 1743, Fielding published his (suppressed?) *Jonathan Wild*. No

one could fail to identify its villainous protagonist with Walpole, to whom the satirical epithet "the Great Man" had long been attached. Yet Walpole was a sublimely (ten volumes) to the *Miscellanies* in which the work appeared, as did the two early poems addressed to Walpole.

Thereafter, in intervals of novel-writing, Fielding published a good deal of support of the "Broad-Bottom" - i.e. coalition ministry headed by Walpole's political heir, Henry Pelham, and his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, coming out strongly against the Jacobite rebels of 1745. Through his patron and landlord, the Duke of Bedford, and another patron, George Lyttleton, who had both been active in the Whig opposition to Walpole but were now comfortably ensconced in the Broad-Bottom, Fielding was 1748. In that capacity he published much in favour of a strong law-only order policy, notoriously his justification of the hanging of a Cornish lad named Bosavern Penlez, who had been caught with allegedly stolen linen during some destructive rioting in the Strand - rioting which threatened to spread to Bedford's extensive property in Covent Garden. In Fielding's last work, the *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (1754), he included a striking tribute to Pelham, a somewhat ungracious acknowledgement of "Newcastle's help in a project of Fielding's to rid the London streets of footpads, and a description of Walpole as "one of the best of men and ministers".

What are we to make of this confusing record of apparent vacillation? Can we extract from it some pattern that will clarify "the politics of mid-eighteenth-century England" - which, heaven knows, can always use more clarification? Brian McCrea thinks he can, and believes that in the process "literary scholars may have much to teach historians" in the historiographical quarrel between the Namierians and anti-Namierians. His efforts to do so are interesting, but, to this reviewer, as baffling as Fielding's own tergiversations.

How did Namier get into it? By discounting ideology and stressing personal interest as the main motive

in the political contests of the century. Throughout the book McCrea insists that there existed, in the first half of the century, a clear ideological distinction between those who called themselves, or were called, Whigs and those called Tories. Tories such as Swift - McCrea will have nothing to do with the caveat that Swift called himself a Whig; we know better than Swift - believed that the welfare of Britain rested on the prosperity of the landowning, whereas Whigs such as Fielding believed that monetary capital (e.g. "the Funds") was an at least equally legitimate form of property. At the same time, personal interest was involved: "The son of a military man who had no land, Fielding was not sympathetic to the views of Bolingbroke and Swift". This neatly over-looks the fact that "Tory" stalwarts as Fielding, Pope, and Johnson had no land either. Moreover, some I would guess many Tories, like Johnson, detested Bolingbroke and repudiated his political ideas.

The book's thesis seems to be the paradoxical one that Namierians and anti-Namierians are both right. The entry in the Index for "Fielding" directs the reader to six widely dispersed passages on the theme of "Attempts to reconcile political interest and ideology". But surely the test of the Namierian view is what happens when such attempts fail? On the subject of Fielding's sudden shift from an anti-Walpole to a pro-Walpole stance in *The Opposition: A Vision*, McCrea tells us that, we "must not overlook one important factor: besides admitting to payments from Walpole, Fielding declared on several occasions that he was not always outwitted a party's financial interests". Perhaps I am overlooking something else, but is this not tantamount to agreeing with Walpole's supposed dictum that "Every man has his price" and that when that price is reached, ideology goes out of the window? And if this is so, does it not confirm the Namierian position? McCrea's elaborate argument is unlikely to convert many readers from Pat Rogers's view of the incident: "Fielding may well have been disillusioned with factious and ineffectual opposition politics, but we must not whitewash his conduct; he changed

sides, less on account of ideology than in order to pay his bills."

Another ideological distinction between some, at least, of the Whig writers (Addison, Steele, Fielding) and some Tories (notably Swift) is that the former were more confident than the latter about the possibility of innate benevolence in human nature. But as with his anti-Walpoleanism, this aspect of Fielding's ideology proves shaky, and McCrea concedes, concerning the latter pamphlets, that "sometimes, particularly in the case of Bosavern Penlez, Fielding's rationalizations for the existing order" - with its severe penal code - "were ethically and intellectually equivocal". A great difficulty with the anti-Namierian position is that its proponents often seem unwilling to distinguish between a genuine ideology and one merely professed. Are "ideologies" so readily modified in subservience to *Realpolitik* to be taken seriously?

An important theme of the book is what McCrea calls "the Tory interpretation of Literary History" to be more precise, of the history of eighteenth-century English literature. By this he means that literary scholars have tended to view the ideas of Tory writers of the time, especially Pope, Swift, and the other "Scribblers", more sympathetically than those of such Whigs as Addison, Steele, and Colley Cibber. He has a point: too many scholars have been inclined to accept at face value the "Scribblers'" violent onslaughts on British society. But this tendency has begun to be corrected by the work of J. H. Plumb and Bernard Goldgar, and perhaps does not warrant the space devoted here to controverting it.

McCrea's knowledge of the Fielding canon and Fielding scholarship cannot be faulted. But one fears that the book has little to teach historians about "the politics of mid-eighteenth-century England" and how Fielding fits into them. Such slips as the solecism in the title of the book - the Parliament at Westminster was that of England but of Great Britain - and the mistaking of one of the most active participants as the "1st Earl of Granville" make one suspect that the author's fami-

# PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

15A Epsom Road • Guildford, Surrey GU1 3JT







# Making friends with failure

By Craig Brown

**TAKUJEFFREY BERNARD:**  
High Life Low Life  
208pp. Jay Landeman. £8.95.  
0 905151 27 9

For the last few years the *High Life* and *Low Life* columns have splendidly complemented the rest of the *Spectator*. News, however witty and cannily reported, gives the impression of flux and impermanence, of a world changing more dramatically than is acceptable to the Conservative mind, so that these two autobiographical columns, with the one author whooping it up each week in night-clubs and resorts and the other whooping it down each week in afternoon drinking-clubs, reassure the reader that life goes on as usual, regardless of nuclear debates, unemployment figures, riots and whatever else appears on the other pages.

But as the *Spectator* needs *High Life* and *Low Life* so do *High Life* and *Low Life* need the *Spectator*. To take in all the columns bundled together, without the usual six-day abstinence between each one, is to emerge dazed and exhausted, having consumed too much too quickly. This effect is worsened by the shoddy production of the book. Large gaps suddenly appear in the middle of paragraphs, punctuation is hazy, no date is given for the original publication of each article, and, by placing the words "High Life" on the top of each left-hand page and "Low Life" on the top of each right-hand page, the publisher confuses and irritates the reader. Add to these complaints the ludicrously overblown and inaccurate claims of the blurb - "Nor since Whig and Muggery has England produced two writers as witty and controversial as Jeffrey Bernard and 'Taki'" - and not even protests of ramshackle quaintness could excuse Jay Landeman.

Though never, to my knowledge, "rumoured to be best (sic) writer in British journalism today", as the blurb claims, Jeffrey Bernard is certainly one of the funniest. Like most good humourists, he thrives on decay, to such an extent that even his means that his beloved Soho is dead, killed by "massive injections of advertising executives with pocket bleepers and a taste for cheap wine and large doses of television flim commercial producers dressed in denim suits and with a liking for Chicken Sorpresa at 1.95 a portion served by sycophantic hordes of semi-naïve looking waiters all thinking they are Rossano Brazzi", fail to conceal a grim gloom. If one loves decay, one must also love the decay of the town. The towniness of Bernard's life lies not in the material poverty of his companions but in their shared belief that life is best viewed from the bottom, that people are more interesting, and true to themselves, when they admit that they are out of step with the world, that they are rejected and dejected and that they should go on from there, drink in hand, smirk on face. Not for nothing is Francis Bacon a friend of Bernard: "I remember once foolishly suggesting that he (Francis Bacon) solve his life problems by moving and living in Switzerland. 'Are you crazy,' he said. 'All those fucking views. They'd drive me mad.'"

The kingdom of the Low is based around a small area of Soho, incorporating The Swiss Pub, The French Pub, The Colony Room, The Coach and Horses and the Patisserie Valerie. An habitué of the latter, though not one of the clan, Paul Potts, once wrote "I looked up at my dream and one said to the other, 'hain't life let us down', and the area, is indeed known as the seat of failed promise. The Low Livers are so fascinated by the fulfilment of their dreams that they, to their, boring, sick and two-dimensional, Malcolm Muggeridge, Antonio Fargas, Mike Pegg, and Kenneth Rapley, who, Pegg explains, some of the agencies of success and

shatters the myth that money, fame and charm bring happiness. Acutely sensitive, Raphael fled to the Dorchester ten years ago where he is now taken seriously by his family and local *churche*. At his Suffolk home he talks about the unimportance of money. Amongst Bernard's *bêtes noires*, though his is less a jealous resentment, more a rigorous cynicism at the easily chipped gloss of success. How much more honest and unassailable is failure: "Since my novel is not selling well - possibly because it hasn't been written - is a typical Low Life line, and his obituary of himself - one of the funniest pieces in the collection - is obsessed with everything that went wrong:

His drinking began to escalate to such an extent that he was unable to hold down the most ordinary of jobs, and he was consequently advised to take up journalism. Even in this field it was noticeable that he was never offered a staff job and he gradually drifted into writing a series of personal and, at times, embarrassing columns and articles about his own wretched experiences.

Jeffrey Bernard's obituaries of others are also among his best pieces. Those of Frank Norman, Muriel Belcher and Dennis Shaw (alias, his obituary of Maurice Richardson is unforgivably excluded) are celebratory, pained, kind, amusing and - so rare in obituaries - true. Similarly the compassion he unwillingly displays elsewhere is all the more human for its reticence. He describes a scene on a tube train in which he threw a cigarette stub to the floor and stamped it out just a second before seeing an Indian tramp reaching for it, to have the last puff:

What I should have done was to give the man a cigarette but I didn't because - I suppose that in the huck of my mind I thought I'd be regarded as being eccentric by the other passengers. The point is, I despise myself for the thought. The episode was over in five seconds and you may think it pretty trivial business, but I should have given the man a cigarette, and a lousy pound note wouldn't have done either him or my own harm. The timing of the incident - my foot getting to the cigarette a split second before his hand - made it look so cruel.

There is a touching comradeship among Lowlifers that is nowhere to be found among Highlifers, and Bernard's wry, aching, fractured prose is perfectly suited to describe it. No other British journalist can keep a conversational style so taut and concise.

At one point, Bernard imagines that Taki would be "like an olive oil of a Martini" if he were to switch to Lowlife, and Taki has recently admitted the truth of this observation. His dislike of The Colony Room being trumped up by The Colony Room's dislike of him. This mutual animosity is not based on class. In many conventional ways Bernard's Lowlifers are socially superior to Taki's Highlifers; though a few Highlifers come from the reject and the British upper classes - Lord Lucan, John Aspinall - most are notable thrill-seekers, divorced from their country of origin by marriage or money, desperately trying to find their favourite sons and daughters of the feckless mother, fame. Bernard's Lowlifers, on the other hand, include the rich and the famous, but both qualities are regarded as inconsequential. Though Taki is forever anxious to prove himself detached ("As I always hated the rich who are known only for being rich, I'll tell their nose week in, week out") the reader cannot help but notice the glaring words between the lines (no fault of Jay Landeman, this) which all the time, scream for Taki's inclusion in the society he attributes to himself. In the war, he had premonitions of the deaths of many of his friends and he later foresaw in detail the death of his own son in a light-airplane crash.

He is angry with the Establishment for its disbelief in astral bodies and the Overmind, but it is unlikely that his book will convince the sceptics, who may well regard the bizarre incidents he recounts more as a testament to the imaginative powers of the living than as a proof of the continuous existence of the dead. It is possible to account for many of his experiences by the laws of chance. Sudden death is common in war and one is more likely to remember and record premonitions that are fulfilled than ones that are not. Moreover, any parent whose son flies regularly in a

nard would never describe someone, as Taki does, as "old Etonian Mrk Birley", and it is particularly interesting that those whom Bernard describes as "hiv polloi" Taki describes as "the hoi polloi".

Whereas one can trust Bernard's description of Low Life, one feels more wary of Taki's descriptions of High Life. These suspicions are engendered by exaggerations and misstatements. Taki states that Andy Warhol never speaks. This is not true - he is a rather dull chatterbox. Taki claims that the rich do not try too hard at sport. This is not true - they are usually as desperate to win as everyone else, particularly someone like Edward Kennedy who people go out of their way to let win at tennis. Taki claims that London clubs now resemble "Park Avenue or Piraesus, with grotesque American women screaming for their husbands to come out and help with the shopping bags, or fat Greek businessmen lamenting tanker rates while loudly sipping Turkish coffee". This is not true - any respectable London club has maintained strict limits on foreign members. Taki's columns form an indigestible dish of half-truths, canards, and, mainly, exaggerations scribbled down in the frantic search for applause and acceptance. How can one tell whether to believe a rather interesting piece on a French brothel being closed down by the hypocritical political establishment when in the piece before we were asked to believe that "Backgammon has become such a status symbol that no gay assistant hairdresser in Los Angeles or black dope-peddler in Harlem would be caught dead without his Asprey's leather executive case?"

## Contacting the Overmind

By Stuart Sutherland

**MICHAEL BENTINE:**  
The Door Marked Summer  
295pp. Granada. £6.95.  
0 246 11405 3

**MICHAEL BENTINE:**  
Smith & Son Removers  
167pp. Robson. £6.75.  
0 86051 153 7

One of the principal objections to a belief in the paranormal is that anyone able to foresee the future could readily make a fortune by backing horses. In *The Door Marked Summer*, Michael Bentine, a television script-writer, ex-Ooon and spiritualist, removes even this argument. He records a story of a publicist in touch with spirits who were able to predict the result of the 2.30, provided he did not attempt to back the winner himself. He was not without profit, since his bar was packed with customers avid for tips: the attitude of the bookies is not recorded.

Bentine provides a *vade mecum* to spiritualism, based on his own extensive experience. From the age of fourteen he took part in table-tapping sessions organized by his father and the slight of ectoplasm has become almost an everyday event for him. His experience of dowling, levitation, exorcism, Oujia, psychic healing. In the war, he had premonitions of the deaths of many of his friends and he later foresaw in detail the death of his own son in a light-airplane crash.

He is angry with the Establishment for its disbelief in astral bodies and the Overmind, but it is unlikely that his book will convince the sceptics, who may well regard the bizarre incidents he recounts more as a testament to the imaginative powers of the living than as a proof of the continuous existence of the dead. It is possible to account for many of his experiences by the laws of chance. Sudden death is common in war and one is more likely to remember and record premonitions that are fulfilled than ones that are not. Moreover, any parent whose son flies regularly in a

medium: He's telling me that your younger brother's name is Aloysius Lawrence, who was a walk-known amateur astronomer and an acknowledged expert on

This 1940s plaster display bust, of a woman with "unswept silvered and stylised hair, wearing vivid maquillage and holding her left arm across her décolleté", is included in a sale of Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Studio Ceramics to be held at Christie's, 8 King Street, St James's, London SW1, on Wednesday September 23. Also included are ceramics by Bernard Leach, glass by Lalique, and a collection of paintings, posters and prints comprising works by, among others, Edgar Chahine, Jules Chéret, Alphonse Mucha, Jacques Villon and Vittorio Zecchin.

light plane with an amateur pilot has reason to be worried.

But some of the incidents recorded are harder to explain away. A dead Rabbi manifested himself through the mediumship of Michael Bentine's brother to a Jewish friend with whom he talked in Hebrew, a language not spoken by the brother. Could the friend have interpreted garbled nonsense as Hebrew and read into it what he wanted to hear? Michael Bentine does well to warn would-be spiritualists against accepting as genuine messages conveyed through mediums, unless the spirit can give clear evidence of having information that could be known only by itself and the person whom it is trying to contact. But Bentine describes many séances where this occurred.

His advice to would-be dabblers in the psychic is sound. He wisely recommends those "of a nervous disposition" not to become involved. Evil spirits can be frightened away by healthy laughter, but they resent anise or sarcastic jokes. Since the presence of a spirit is usually pre-empted by intense cold, sitters would be well advised to be warmly clad. Scientific investigation of séances is unfortunately handicapped by the extreme danger to the medium of someone turning on a torch to investigate the nature of ectoplasm. Photography under infra-red light is, however, in order, though the films are likely to be mysteriously blurred.

Michael Bentine is so obviously a sincere and courageous man that whether or not one subscribes to his beliefs it would be improper to mock them. While he confines himself to his own experiences, the book retains its interest, if only as a challenge to explain the phenomena he records. The autobiographical chapters, particularly those on his wartime experiences, are well and plainly written, with the occasional burst of humour as when he reports an imaginary conversation between a medium and a sceptical sitter.

Medium: He's telling me that your younger brother's name is Aloysius Lawrence, who was a walk-known amateur astronomer and an acknowledged expert on



**WENDY HINDE:**  
Castlereagh  
320pp. Collins. £16.  
0 00 216308 X

Castlereagh has been remembered as the most hated public figure of the nineteenth century, and the modern reader is unlikely to have a higher opinion of him. The problems which he faced in England and Ireland seem less remote in 1981 than they did fifteen years ago - revolutionary violence, political assassinations, large-scale unemployment, social unrest, unruly demonstrations, police brutality, and cities set on fire by rioting mobs; but the conservative backlash has still a long way to go before it will be politically possible for a government to deal with the situation by resorting to the methods which Castlereagh adopted in 1798 and 1819.

During Castlereagh's lifetime, the English aristocracy and the landowning class resisted the popular movements with a savagery unequalled before or since. At the end of the seventeenth century they had led a revolution for constitutional government against royal absolutism. In the eighteenth century they had been selfish and corrupt, but easy-going and tolerant. The French Revolution, and the rise of the liberal and democratic movements which followed, transformed them for fifty years after 1789 into pitiless enemies of everything that is now accepted as progressive in the twentieth century. It is not easy today to arouse sympathy for a class or a man who believed in the grossest political and economic inequality; in the denial of the vote to 95 per cent of the population; the suppression of free speech and the suspension of *habeas corpus*; negro slavery in the West Indies; child labour in mines and factories; the harshness of the Industrial Revolution; the imprisonment of trade unionists; the Highland clearances; the persecution of freethinkers; the death penalty for over two hundred offences; savage floggings in the army and navy; the legal subjection of wives to their husbands; and the attitude to the lower classes which caused Lady Dorothy Nevill to say, when she was an old lady in 1910, that when she was young the rich had "no more heart than a stone peach on a lodging-house chimney piece".

Opponents of a system always single out individuals as responsible, and the liberals of his time, and their children and grandchildren, selected Castlereagh as the villain of the piece. Wellington, who was at least as reactionary and whose influence both at home and abroad was quite as harmful from a liberal point of view, has been regarded by posterity, not as a reactionary oppressor, but as the hero of Waterloo, Canning and Palmerston, who during Castlereagh's lifetime supported his policy of repression, veered left after his death and have been remembered as the liberals that they afterwards became. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, was too much of a toady to be remembered at all. It is Castlereagh who has been chosen as the scapegoat for the policy and attitude of the government and Establishment of his time. He is therefore a challenge to a biographer, who has to be fair to him, to make the twentieth-century reader see his point of view and feel interest and sympathy for him as a character, without whitewashing him, without suppressing the truth about what he actually did, and without adopting the apologetic and defensive attitude of some biographers whose books read like a plea in mitigation by counsel for the defence at the trial of a criminal who has pleaded guilty.

Wendy Hindle has avoided all the pitfalls. Her references are correct, and she has occasionally relied on a secondary source when the primary material was available; but her *Castlereagh* is as lucid and scholarly as any history of his time, and in addition has a literary sparkle which makes it an outstanding biography.

# Smooth, grim and conservative

By Jasper Ridley

Robert Stewart, the future Lord Castlereagh, was born, like Wellington and Napoleon, in the summer of 1769. He was the son of an Ulster Presbyterian gentleman who lived in the fashionable quarter of Dublin and had married the daughter of an English peer. Robert's mother died when he was thirteen months old, leaving him her miniature and a plait of her hair which he wore in a brooch all his life. He was brought up by a loving stepmother, Lord Camden's daughter, whom his father married five years after the death of his first wife. His family had always been Whig, and Robert as a child was taught to sympathize with the American colonists in their War of Independence: "I am still a true American", he wrote at the age of eight. In 1789 Lord Camden arranged for his father to be created Lord Londonderry, and when he became an Earl in 1796 Robert took the courtesy title of Viscount Castlereagh. He was elected to succeed his father as Opposition MP for County Down in the Irish Parliament, and at political banquets joined in the toast "Our Sovereign Lord the People" which was considered to be almost seditious by the authorities.

But Castlereagh was not the only Whig who reacted differently to a revolution led by Anglo-American gentlemen across the Atlantic and to one dominated by Parisian *sans-culottes* across the Channel. Within a few years of being elected Opposition MP he had changed sides, and was playing an active part in stamping out the popular movement which many of his former friends were encouraging. Wendy Hindle explains this in a shrewd and pithy sentence:

The triumphs and excesses of the French revolutionaries, the unrest in Ireland, the spell cast by Pitt, and his own essentially conservative temperament, must all have combined to line him up with the forces of law and order - or, from another point of view, of repression.

Castlereagh was not a cruel man, and the author gives several exam-

ples of his clemency during the troubles in Ireland. He was much more intelligent than the brutal army officers and the prejudiced Irish Protestant landowners. With him it was all a matter of cold political calculation. Already as a young man of twenty-three he showed an impressive but almost frightening logic in opposing the concession which allowed Roman Catholics to become barristers on the grounds that if they were able to pursue successful careers at the bar, it would be more difficult to persuade them to accept their exclusion from political and public life. After the introduction of 1798, when he was Chief Secretary for Ireland, he was in favour of commuting death sentences and offering pardons to the lesser rebels convicted of high treason if they were prepared to betray their comrades and act as informers for the government - a policy which angered both the Protestant gentry who clamoured for wholesale executions, and judges who were shocked at this violation of the principles of justice. The Radicals and democrats were justified in thinking that Castlereagh was a more dangerous enemy than the stupid and savage General Lake, who allowed his troops to flog and ravage indiscriminately.

Castlereagh was hated in Ireland as an Irishman and a former Whig who had deserted to the English enemy. In England he disgusted the romantic and passionate liberal intellectuals by his icy temperament. This temperamental incompatibility was perhaps the chief dividing line between Castlereagh and his friends in the Establishment on the one hand, and the Radical leaders on the other. Several of the prominent revolutionaries in Ireland, including Lord Edward Fitzgerald himself, were not only members of the same class as Castlereagh, but were close to him or his wife. At the outbreak of the troubles, Castlereagh rode to Limerick to arrest the local ringleaders. One of them was the young Charles Teeling, whose father was a friend of Castlereagh's. Before sending him off to prison, Castlereagh invited the young rebel to have supper with

him. During the meal, he asked him his opinion of some of the other revolutionary leaders who had been arrested. Teeling spoke warmly in their praise. Castlereagh did not reply, but filled his glass and passed the wine to his prisoner.

We can understand why the ladies and gentlemen who knew Castlereagh, from the Prince Regent downwards, paid him the compliment of describing him in the accepted contemporary phrase, as "very gentlemanlike"; but Byron called him a "cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid miscreant", and by Shelley "Very smooth he looked, yet grim". Even his friends commented, sometimes admiringly, on his coldness. Wellington's niece, Lady Burghersh, meeting him at the Allied headquarters at Basle during the 1814 campaign against Napoleon, wrote: "I quite delight in you. I had no idea he had so much fun in him, though he is impenetrably cold."

In private life, his coldness was only on the surface. His profound love of music showed that there was an emotional side to him. After failing miserably in love with his stepmother's sister, Lady Elizabeth Pratt, who remained his close friend, he married the Earl of Buckinghamshire's daughter Emily when he was twenty-five and she was twenty-two. Wendy Hindle has no doubt that he was deeply in love with her, and she with him, from the beginning to the end. She relegated Emily to the subordinate role that she played in Castlereagh's career. But says enough to give us a vivid impression of this attractive but not very intelligent woman, who was bored with politics but devoted to her husband. She did her duty as a hostess at diplomatic receptions and in his constituency at election times, but on one occasion let rip and caused adverse comment by wearing his Garter cross in her hair at a ball at the Congress of Vienna. Her strict moral code could sometimes be awkward. She not only objected to calling on Viennese society ladies of doubtful reputation, but made things difficult for Castlereagh by quarrelling

with Lady Conyngham, the mistress of George IV. Having aroused the reader's interest in Lady Castlereagh, the author might have told us, if only in a footnote, what happened to her after Castlereagh's death; but we have to go to the index to find out when she died.

Wendy Hindle divides her book into three parts: "The Irish Dimension", "English Politician", and "European Statesman". In tracing the development of Castlereagh's talents, and the increasing importance and scale of his activities, she is informative and interesting about events in Ireland, England and Europe before and after Waterloo. She preserves the right balance between public events and Castlereagh's private life, and switches confidently from the intricacies of military strategy in the campaign against Napoleon and the diplomacy of the post-war Congress to Castlereagh's interest in his sheep at his country house at North Cray in Kent, and his discomforts in his travels by sea and land to the Allied armies in Europe during the bitter winter of 1813-14.

In the summer of 1822, this frigid defender of the social order, with his strict religious and subterranean principles, became convinced that he had been seen entering a brothel and engaging in homosexual practices, and was being blackmailed because of it. His doctor and his friends realized that he was suffering from hallucinations; but, though carefully watched, he cut his throat with a penknife which they had failed to conceal from him. Wendy Hindle mentions three factors which may have made him more prone to this mental disorder: his age, fifty-three; the recent death of his father; and his reserved, repressed personality. She is too conscientious a historian to speculate on the basis of insufficient evidence, and wisely contents herself with pointing out that in view of his state of mind it would be foolish to believe his confessions of homosexuality and other crimes.

## In defence of diversity

By W.F. Bynum

**MICHAEL ROSE:**  
Curator of the Dead  
Thomas Hodgkin (1798-1866)  
148pp. Peter Owen. £9.50.  
0 7206 0527

The best way for a doctor to achieve lasting fame among the general public is to describe a disease to which his name subsequently becomes attached. If it is a relatively common disease, so much the better. Few people know much about the man who described Oguchi's disease, whereas Robert Graves - of Graves' Disease - has fared better. Once the opium stick, doctors and historians often scurry to the earlier literature and discover that someone had actually anticipated the "original" description, but opium, once familiar, rarely disappears. It is a medicine, and a doctor with a disease named after him is generally the second person to have described it.

Thomas Hodgkin has been immortalized by his disease, one of three "Great Man of Guy's" who, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century carved out such niches for themselves. The other two, Richard Bright and Thomas Addison, had long and harmonious careers as physicians at Guy's Hospital; not so Hodgkin. His association with it lasted a mere dozen years, as the curator of the pathological museum and lecturer in morbid anatomy (but Hodgkin was then often called). In 1837, when Addison was promoted from assistant to full physician to the hospital, Hodgkin, already middle-aged and famous, applied for Addison's old post. On merit, he would

have had it without a contest. Instead, he was manoeuvred into a corner where Victorian honour dictated resignation from the hospital altogether. His subsequent private medical practice was somewhat desultory; he preferred treating the poor and continuing to offend his wealthy patients by charging too little for his services.

But neither medical science nor medical practice had even been his chief preoccupation. Philanthropy, social reform and ethnology always ranked higher in Hodgkin's scheme of things, and his relatively comfortable income and lack of official duties permitted him to devote much time during his later years to lecturing to labouring people, and to campaigning on behalf of aboriginal groups who faced decimation or extinction in the wake of nineteenth-century colonization. He was a founder of and major spokesman for the Aborigines Protection Society (1837) and a trustee of the New Zealand Company, the Hudson Bay Company and other enterprises aimed at spreading the gospel of European values ruthlessly throughout the world. He valued cultural diversity, although sometimes he wanted simply to turn aboriginal peoples into mini-capitalists. Finally, in his last decade, he increasingly identified himself with the problems of the Jews and he was on his way to Palestine with his friend Sir Moses Montefiore when he died in 1866 in Jaffa.

Hodgkin's was a particularly complex personality which can be understood only against his cultural, religious and social background. A devout Quaker from a moderately prosperous stock, he probably never recovered from the fact that Quaker law denied him marriage to his early love, a first cousin. Impul-

sive and sharp-tongued when speaking for others, he could not change Quaker law, so he passively submitted rather than leave the faith of his fathers. His medical career was obviously hampered by his roofness and independence, his lack of deference for authority and his penchant for the underdog. Indeed, it could be argued that his effectiveness on behalf of the aborigines might have been greater had he possessed more tact.

Materials for full study of Hodgkin's life are sparse in the possession of the family, who have made microfilms of many letters, diaries and unpublished manuscripts available at the Friends Historical Library in London. Michael Rose, himself a haematologist, has used but by no means exhausted this archival material. The virtue of his slim volume lies in his attempt to get right Hodgkin's whole life, and not simply dwell on his contributions to medicine. No one could work for long with the Hodgkin material without realizing how much his name and his enterprise preoccupied him. Dr Rose has got the proportions about right. He has uncovered interesting new facts bearing on Hodgkin's relations with the Quaker community, his finances, his work on the Poor Law.

However, this volume betrays certain signs of haste in both research and writing. It too frequently relies on strings of long quotations or paraphrases from primary or secondary sources without much attempt at interpretation. One of Rose's main authorities on Hodgkin's anthropological work is an unpublished autobiography by - Hodgkin's nephew (and cousin) Thomas Hodgkin. The younger Hodgkin clearly had no real grasp of the intellectual context in which his uncle worked and has unfortunately led Rose astray. Rose is

on equally shaky ground when he tries to contrast the religious background to Hodgkin's ideas on savagery and civilization with those of the "Clapham Philanthropists". His discussion of the Aborigines Protection Society would have been improved had he taken into account recent work by George Stocking and others.

These are fairly serious flaws, even in a book not avowedly "academic." We can be grateful for Dr Rose's attempt to produce a rounded sketch of Hodgkin, but the full-length portrait still remains to be done.

**Pig Press**

7 Crossview Terrace  
Durham DH1 4JY

New Titles:

Lee Harwood/Jud Walker:  
All the wrong notes: £2.80

Tony Jackson:  
Hot Novels: £3.90

William Corbett:  
Sohedule Rhespody: £1.80

Send s.p.s. for full list.

Retake the language



## commentary

## Hide and seek

By Nicholas Shrimpton

Patrick Caulfield: Paintings 1963-1981  
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

Patrick Caulfield is British painting's most outrageously conspicuous invisible man. Since his earliest days as a student, he has been searching for painterly anonymity, for a process by which the artwork might be everything and the author of no account. While his contemporaries painted fiercely emotive social realism, or dabbled in the psychological intensities of Abstract Expressionism, he worked steadily towards a pictorial language of complete impersonality. By the mid-1960s he had forged a technique as flat as the boards on which he painted and as cool as a colouring book. "Santa Margherita Ligure" or "A View of the Ruins" have about as much humane individuality as the voice of the Speaking Clock. The paradoxical result is, of course, that he has developed one of the most individual and recognizable styles in the whole of contemporary art.

At the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, he is the subject of the gallery's second major mid-career retrospective for a contemporary British painter (the first, two years ago, was devoted to Allen Jones). Marco Livingstone, with Caulfield's help and advice, has assembled an impressive collection of nearly fifty canvases and has written an illuminating catalogue which includes Caulfield's first sustained reflection on his own work. Hung by the painter himself, with a careful eye to both chronology and thematic connections, the show will be at the Walker until October 4. Thereafter those who believe everything they read about Tostet, and which at the thought of a trip to Lime Street, will be able to see it at the Tate (October 27 to

January 3) with, I suspect, some slight loss of focus resulting from the break-up of the present, very precise disposition of the paintings.

Presented like a trade card as you step into the show in Liverpool is "The Artist's Studio" of 1964. While scarcely Caulfield's most assured or endearing painting, it does tell you an enormous amount about him. The resolute flatness and the impersonal brushwork have remained his basic trademarks. The imagery, meanwhile, sums up his stylistic sources. The bounding line and patches of abstract colour announce his fundamental debt to Gris and Matisse. The decorative border refers us to the Minoan frescoes which stimulated his interest in setting representational objects against flat grounds. The elaborate jar speaks of the interest (developed via Delacroix) in Arabic pattern which seems to have encouraged his characteristic use of black defining lines. And the picture postcard, and the commercial-artists-modernism of the image of a palette, remind us that this is a painter who was initially assumed to be a Pop artist.

If this exhibition has a thesis, however, it consists of an attempt to refute that last, and widespread, assumption. Resisting the spectacular architectural canvases which fill the rest of the entrance-hall, and turning sharp left into the first of two small rooms, you are given an immediate account of Caulfield's origins. It is one which stresses his intellectual interest in pictorial technique and plays down his response to popular and contemporary visual experience.

It is easy to understand why a painter, given a chance to hang his own retrospective, should wish, in 1981, to diminish his connection with Pop Art. The label now seems a distinctly dated one, and Caulfield always wore it in a highly individual way. From first to last his paintings have been interested in picture space, in the dynamics of compo-

sition and in the problems of pictorial illusion. But from first to last, it must be said, he has also addressed himself to Pop imagery. "Engagement Ring" (1963) is a transcription of commercial illustration as well as (in the words of the catalogue) a study of "the ways in which an illusionistic image could be placed tellingly against a vast flat background." "Still Life: Marooned" (1980-81) is a rendering of five French recipe postcards and a photograph, as well as a game of hide-and-seek with styles. Caulfield's great distinction as a Pop artist, as Livingstone's article in the catalogue concedes, is his honesty, his willingness to present the reality of English popular taste rather than indulge in fantasies about America. Though this exhibition seems not to want to draw attention to it, it is his streak of vulgarity which gives his paintings their power.

His awful grasp of "Scandinavian" decor, his deadly eye for domestic colour, and the unflinching precision with which he catches clutter (the tank of orange goldfish placed in front of a full colour photo-mural of the Château de Chillon in "After Lunch", for example) are essential to his best effects. Indeed, one thing which this exhibition for the first time makes clear is that there was a period in the early 1970s when he began to be seduced by elegance. The large architectural paintings are grand and sweet rather than tough and pungent. The return, in more recent work, of passages of vulgar photo-realism suggests that Caulfield himself has noticed it.

The most unexpected pleasure of this exhibition for me was a painting from 1977 which marks the beginning of this change, "After Work". It is a subtle rendering of a contemporary visual environment, its marvelous sense of light, and its strangely elegant tone (which Livingstone astutely links with Hopper) make it a delight. Everybody who works in an office should see it.



"Self-portrait done at sea", by William Alexander (1767-1816), draughtsman to the first British embassy to China in 1793. The eye-patch, which has since faded, seems to have been painted in either to conceal the poor alignment of the eyes, or to add a nautical effect, or both. An exhibition of Alexander's work has just opened at the Royal Pavillion, Brighton.

## Me and us and them

By Stoddard Martin

Loose Ends  
Hampstead Theatre

Mike Wellor's new play is about the difficulty of keeping a marriage together in the 1970s. It suggests at least three explanations. First is the odyssey of women's careers of equal importance to men's. Second, related, is the mobility of contemporary life: Paul's work as a film-editor takes him from Boston to New York to Los Angeles, but Susan's work as an architectural photographer does not necessarily take her to the same places at the same time. Third, more essential and less apparent, is the pressure of an over-extended kind of love. Paul and Susan are Spock babies who have grown up as prototypes of the "Me Generation". Their dependence on one another is immature and stifling, a legacy of the co-sleeping they knew from their mothers and the comforts they have always had from the affluent society. When the inevitable explosion occurs for them, it seems just another stage to the American way of growing-up.

Susan's reluctance to let her progress be derailed by biology may deserve our sympathy as much as Paul's angst at not having a child. In the end, however, the focus seems narrow. *Loose Ends* is carefully written and engrossing, though some of the scenes drag and sink toward soap opera. The acting, especially from Anna Nygh and Kevin McNally in the leads, is good. The American accents are one of the more accurate. The costumes are period perfect. The ironical sentimentality of the Randy Newman songs between scenes comments on the action nicely.

The play might be titled *Scenes from a Marriage*. It is an episodic account of Paul's and Susan's relationship from their premarital co-sleeping in 1970 to their post-divorce intercourse in New York in 1979. It is utterly realistic, probably taken from life, and the title may mean that there are more scenes from this marriage, or ex-marriage, to come. Like the last play on at Hampstead, which was also American and about the recent past, *Loose Ends* fades into an uncertain resolution. In the first scene Paul has said of his experiences in the Peace Corps: "Things just happen to me, and then they're over - they don't mean anything." In the last, his struggling reaction to the failure of his marriage, both as this fatalism.

Paul dismisses his parents' lifestyle as "they just wallow in a lousy payment - and for the rest of the play we hear nothing about anyone other than his own kind. The only toll provided is a dope-smoking buddy of Paul's who riffs "Shitfuck. Con-

struction Company" and lives in the country with his hippy mama, who produces babies as often as Susan produces one-woman shows. After their last embrace, Paul is left alone in Susan's apartment staring at photographs of this old buddy and his family. He has divorced Susan because she aborted their child. A pream in the hall is death to all of Susan could not bear the possibility that her career and post-Manhattan lifestyle might be upset.

Now available in paperback...  
"It's strength lies in its...  
a number of languages...  
Arabic, German and French...  
classical texts himself. It...  
valuable clarifications of the...  
absurd. The result is a...  
JOHN WELLS'S  
Christianity  
& Homosexuality  
...  
"John Wells's...  
analysis and moral...  
for it tells of things...  
one would have...  
uncharted and...  
scholarship and...  
...  
"A book that is...  
for the reader and...  
...  
The University...  
125 Buckingham...

## commentary

## The Merchant of Vienna

By Peter Branscombe

On the Razzle  
Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh

In recent years the National Theatre has brought Horváth and Schnitzler into its repertoire; now it's the turn of Johann Nestroy (1801-62), the last and greatest in the long line of Viennese actor-dramatists. The play chosen is an adaptation by Tom Stoppard of *Einen Jux will er sich machen*, which comes roughly halfway down the chronological list of Nestroy's eighty-odd plays. First performed in 1842, it was one of his greatest successes - indeed, only the much earlier *Lumpazvagabundus* was performed more often in his lifetime. It isn't hard to account for the play's popularity - it is beautifully constructed and very funny, its tone mildly sentimental yet ironic, its satire subdued and for the most part subtle. Nestroy was settling into a new phase in his career, cutting out extravagance, moving away from pseudo-magic and outrageous parody, and limiting the music to just three songs, all intended for his own parts.

Stoppard isn't the first person to adapt Jux. Thornton Wilder's *The Merchant of Yonkers* (1938) is loosely based on it. After the War, Wilder modified his version and retitled it *The Matchmaker*. In this guise, directed by Tyrone Guthrie, it was mounted at the Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh, during the 1954 Festival, prior to its London run and its further adaptation as the musical *Hello Dolly!*

Now, just over twenty-seven years later, and at the same Edinburgh theatre, the old story reappears in Tom Stoppard's adaptation. He has worked from an English version of Nestroy's play made for him by Neville and Stephen Place which, though reasonably accurate, is rather stilted - but then, translating Nestroy is an almost impossible task. Apart from contemporary allusions, and the need to find some equivalent for the old but no longer valid conventions of the Viennese Volkstheater, the greatest problems are presented by Nestroy's language - brilliantly inventive, precisely rhythmic and modulated, strong in word-play spanning High German and Viennese dialect. Wilder relocated his play to Yonkers and New York; Stoppard's content to keep the Viennese setting - a Vienna mad on all things Scottish (not a gimmick for Edinburgh audiences) - and the National Theatre evidently considers the short Festival run as a mere preview for the "official" opening at the Lyceum Theatre on September 22.

The story is this. Zaogler, an

elderly smalltown grocer, plans to marry a milliner in the city, and to prevent his niece and ward Marie from marrying her impoverished admirer, Sonders, by sending her off to his sister-in-law in the city. Zaogler leaves in charge his chief clerk Weinberl (now promoted partner), and Christopher (promoted from apprentice to clerk), while he goes off to the city for the Grocers' Company parade, and to further his marriage plans. Weinberl, egged on by Christopher, determines to shut up shop and visit the city for an adventure, before middle age and the respectability of his new position end any hope of a youthful fling. In the city, Weinberl and Christopher can only avoid a confrontation with their employer by darting into a milliner's shop, where in no time Weinberl's over-ready tongue turns him into the new husband of the milliner's closest friend. In an attempt to maintain the fiction, he takes the little party off to a smart restaurant - where Zaogler and his new servant Melchior are on the look-out for Sonders and Marie. Only a screen separates Zaogler's table from that of Weinberl and his party. Weinberl and Christopher, almost penniless, slip away in disguise, but are carried off in the coach which Zaogler has engaged to take his errant niece to his sister-in-law's. When the screen is knocked over, Zaogler finds himself face to face with his fiancée (the milliner), and paying both bills. Everyone turns up at Zaogler's sister-in-law's flat, mostly under false identities, and again the grocer's assistants manage to escape. Back at the grocer's shop next morning, the two who went on the razzle are just in time to establish shaky alibis before Zaogler and his party return. Sonders has inherited a small fortune so can have Marie; Zaogler is to marry his milliner, and Weinberl will marry her friend.

Stoppard neatly has her turn-out to be Weinberl's lonely-hearts

column pen-friend, in fact: each user of the Jux story has made his own contribution to it. Nestroy was not the first in the field - it isn't clear whether Stoppard is aware of Nestroy's source, an early play by that busy man of letters, lawyer, translator, and for many years drama critic of *The Times*, John Oxenford. The twenty-two-year-old Oxenford's one-act farce *A Day Well Spent* (produced at the Lyceum, London, in 1835) is very accomplished, and contains virtually all the elements which have been worked up with different emphases by later authors. Nestroy expanded it into a four-act play, and added the character of Melchior, for the other star of his company, Wenzel Scholz. Wilder's main addition is Dolly Levi, the Matchmaker herself. Stoppard follows Wilder in entirely removing the subplot in which the two adventurers return from the city just in time to prevent their employer being burgled. He adds at the close a little rags-to-riches who is taken on as shop-boy; he builds up the Coschman's part; and he introduces sexual and lavatorial jokes of a vigour and raucous unthinkability in Metternich's Vienna. The Edinburgh audience seemed to miss some of the innuendoes, though there was uproarious laughter at most of the jokes (a typical example: "Do you suppose I'd let my airdate be hounded up hill and - my hearse be mounted up hill and bank by a truffle-hound - be trifled with and hounded by a mountebank? Not ununny, though it slows the action; some of the jokes are gratuitously offensive.)

On the Razzle maintains Nestroy's names for the associations are lost, and in the second-act dénouement the milliner and her friend recognize Weinberl by his name, though in fact he introduced himself to them under another one). Stoppard has altered proportionately - the part of Zaogler (Dinadene Landen - marvel-

lous in appearance, inconsistent in accent) has been extended, that of Weinberl curtailed (it was Nestroy's own part; here it is taken by Ray Brooks, stylish but subdued, and looking a bit like Schubert). The Christopher, bolder and less naive than the original, is played - according to the modern Viennese custom - by a woman, Felicity Kendal. Nestroy intended the part for a man (Wilhelm Bräbke, dramatist as well as actor); but the delightful Miss Kendal makes a plausible and lively enough youngster, and a suitably gauche girl when disguised for the escape from the restaurant. Most of the other members of the large cast are adequate in a two-dimensional way, as yet lacking the individuality and brio ideally required.

Carl Toms's sets are variable - Zaogler's shop in the first and last scenes is a delight, complete with taproom, goods chute, a plethora of goods and wares, and overhead wires from counter to cash-desk. The fashion shop is fittingly lavish; and the sister-in-law's sitting-room, complete with raucous parrot and large cat on the *Kachelofen*, is fine. The street and garden are dull, though, and the restaurant is not closely enough geared to the requirements of the drama. Nestroy was becoming more direct, simple, economical by the time he wrote Jux; Wood and Toms have opted for luxurious detail, in which they are abetted by Robert Bryan's mainly bright lighting; speed of scene-change would have been a more valuable asset.

On the Razzle is intermittently brilliant; when fully played-in and tightened up, it should prove a rewarding evening's entertainment. What it lacks is the confident command of every nuance of idiom which characterizes Nestroy's play. Despite all the effort Tom Stoppard has made at localization, his version seems rootless.

## The diagnostic disease

By Edwin Morgan

The Brothers Karamazov  
Edinburgh Festival

When Robert Louis Stevenson had finished reading *Crime and Punishment*, he wrote about the experience: "It nearly finished me. It was like bawling at illness." One can hardly speculate on what he would have said of *The Brothers Karamazov*, which is much longer. Yet Stevenson was not attacking Dostoevsky, simply trying to convey the power of a novel he thought was one of the greatest ever written. It is interesting that Dostoevsky himself uses the same image, in a notebook entry addressing his great rival Tolstoy: "My morbidity is healthier than your health."

If there is one of Dostoevsky's novels where this paradox - amply tests itself, it is *The Brothers Karamazov*. From the "morbidity" or "unnatural" central theme of paralytic Smerdyakov's epilepsy, to say nothing of the sensational and melodramatic elements of what is among other things a murky story of crime, detection, interrogation, and trial, this is a book which might seem to be loaded down to the ground with guilt and hate, doubt and darkness, sickness of the soul. Yet it has an abundant vitality. In the Karamazovs' love of life, their vigorous arguments, their impressively immediate, extra-textual exposing of spiritual states. The whole book, despite its length and its depressions, can readily be seen as dramatic, with suspense, confrontation, and "arresting" of characters (both figurative and literal); and above all with the

unifying interest of a tightly-knit family of four sons and a father.

So the Brighton Theatre has boldly, and in the result very successfully, turned it into a piece of theatre. The thousand pages and sixty-odd characters are reduced to an acting cast of four in a two-hour production, and if this sounds impossible, the packed audiences at Edinburgh suggest that something very effective has been achieved in Richard Crane's version, directed by Payne Williams. It is played in the Lower Freemasons' Hall (a title asking for Fyodor Mikhailovich's sardonic comment), a low-ceilinged, wood-paneled room with unmarked seats and an acting area making use of a simple, flexible arrangement of ramps, tables and blocks. The low ceiling and paneled walls might have been made for the more claustrophobic or morbid aspect of the story; the open staging and white style of acting are a well-devised counterpoint to bring out the liveliness and assertiveness of the Karamazovs. It is a pity that the flat floor and poor light-lines mean mud craning of necks, as the action jumps from ramp to ramp. With a surprising yet somehow entirely appropriate touch, each of the two acts ends with a song and a round dance by the four brothers, reminding us that the art of theatre is not the same as the art of the novel.

Richard Crane's problem was one of compression, and obviously in his concentration on the four brothers he risked jettisoning the dense social, political and religious dimension of the book, but it is astonishing to find so much of the most and the best of it all there. Certainly, Father Zosima and his discourses have drunk, as has the attack of such dangerously democratic innovations as trial by jury, and the inclusion of

a third generation in the troop of schoolboys befriended by Alyosha; but we have not lost the Grand Inquisitor (though played rather more for laughs, *Man and Superman* edition, than I would have liked), or Dmitry's deeply moving dream of the charred cottages and the crying "babby", or the story of the onion, or Ivan's dialogue with the Devil. The four actors - Bruce Alexander, Alan Rickman, Stephen Boxer, Peter Kelly - temporarily take on some of the other main parts: old Karamazov, Father Zosima, the Prosecutor, Katerina and Grushenka. The fact that each of the brothers in turn throws on the huge fur cloak representing Karamazov père may have proved confusing to spectators not well up in the story, though in fact it is excellently suggestive of the close relationships and coattails from father to sons, each son with a bit of the old reprobate in him, each at some point wishing his death. Both the teamwork and the individual portrayals are professional and convincing.

Even in Dostoevsky's centenary year, *The Brothers Karamazov* still retains an extraordinary power, its words and details, especially through its series of bizarre or striking incidents, tales, images and epigrams. Christ appears in sixteenth-century Seville. An angel holds out an onion to an old woman in hell. A septic walks a quadrillion kilometres to the gates of Paradise. A serf-boy offends his master and is stripped naked and torn to pieces by the landowner's hunting dogs. Much of the impact of this can still be felt even in the Brighton Theatre's makeshift adaptation, and I am sure they can look forward with confidence to their forthcoming Soviet tour, when the production will visit Moscow, Leningrad and Tbilisi.

## New Oxford Books: Entertainment

## American Operetta

Gerald Bordman  
This book traces the long history of operetta on the American stage, beginning with *The Bohemian Girl*, through Gilbert and Sullivan, Victor Herbert, Rudolf Friml, and Sigmund Romberg, Jerome Kern and Rogers and Hammerstein, to the present end of the shows of Stephen Sondheim. Throughout the book the author assembles a tranda in operettas and compares different styles. Illustrated £9.95

## Night Creature

A Journal of Jazz, 1975-1980  
Whitney Balliett

This is a continuation of a journal Balliett kept in the early 1970s which was published under the title *New York Notes*. It stands as a record of jazz life, particularly in New York, from 1975 to 1980, and contains profiles of Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Fred Astaire, Charlie Mingus, Bobby Heckert, and Jimmy McPartland. £11

## Riding on a Blue Note

Jazz and American Pop  
Gary Giddins

Gary Giddins, the most promising new writer on popular music to emerge in the 1970s, is jazz critic of the *Village Voice*. The essays in his book are on singers - Crosby, Sinatra, Presley, Ethel Waters, Sarah Vaughan; instrumentalists - Count Basie, Chet Baker, and Sonny Rollins; composers, including Scott Joplin, Duke Ellington, Charlie Mingus, and Ornette Coleman; on movements in jazz; and on the jazz trade. £12.95 17 September

## How to Read a Film

James Monaco

"Anyone embarking on a film course whether as teacher or student, should avail himself of Jim Monaco's lucid guide to the art, technology, history, and theory of the movies. *International Film Guide*. For this revised edition the author has thoroughly updated the original text to include discussions of recent films and of recent advances in media technology, including satellite and cable. Thirty new photographs and diagrams have been added. Second edition illustrated paper covers £5.95 24 September

## Family Photographs

Content, Meaning, and Effect  
Julia Hirsch

Family photographs are images loaded with personal associations, curiosity, and nostalgia. They are also social documents, and they also tend to conform to the conventions of group portraiture. This book weaves these social, anthropological, and art historical themes together to illuminate the simplest and most universal of forms. Illustrated £11

## Oxford University Press



## commentary

## Shakestaire Superstar

By Hermione Lee

Candide  
As You Like It  
Edinburgh Festival

The Birmingham Repertory Theatre's *Candide* is a cheery, amiable, energetic affair, but no amount of gaily costumes, loud singing and strenuous routines can disguise the fact that Bernstein and Wheeler's musical has turned something hard into something soft.

The work has a peculiar theatrical history: the original American production of 1956, directed by Tyrone Guthrie ("book" by Lillian Hellman, lyrics by Richard Wilbur, Dorothy Parker and John Latouche) was not a success, but the music, particularly the overture, became popular. The present version, already a hit in America, has been re-vamped by Hal Prince and Hugh Wheeler, with musical additions by Stephen Sondheim. Musically, there's an oddly blurred effect, as familiar tunes of a *West Side Story* vintage (though none as good) rub shoulders with the bland, snazzy style of *A Little Night Music*. Verbal, the results are unexciting. A very few key phrases from Voltaire ("the best of all possible worlds") are mixed into the innocuous, easy-going dialogue ("I bet you're wondering why I'm dressed like this", "I must learn not to judge by appearances" and the uninvited lyrics ("My life is as empty as an apple core", to rhyme with "utter here"). It's hard to tell what use was made of the talents of the original lyric-writers - the only likely trace of Dorothy Parker I could hear was Cunegonde's lines "I have no strong objection to champagne". Of the few verbal jokes, the funniest is Voltaire's to the old lady's "We must make haste and ride to Cadiz, although I can hardly keep my seat with only one buttock."

But it's more than *bon mots* which are missing. The musical gets rid of anything troubling, complicated or difficult in the book. Candide's ruthless killings of Cunegonde's lovers ("I've got into the way of killing people. There's no time to hesitate"), his passion for philosophical discussions, his final pragmatic resignation to a private working life, and the dry indifferent way in which the narrative treats him are lost: instead we have a lovable, spirited hero meant to engage our sympathies. Voltaire, who appears as the narrator, even refers to him as "Poor Candide". The butcheries, rapes, floggings, hangings, and attacks of the pox which litter the book are joltily or inoffensively rendered ("What a Day For an Auto Da Fé" is the only number which approaches Voltaire's irony, but without any real sense of horror). Several of the most important characters - Candide's practical and rational servant, Cacambo, the cynical Voltairean scholar, Martin - disappear in the interests of simplification. Political and theological matter is merely gestured to ("Praise be to God and Martin Luther") and Voltaire's wonderful geographical inventiveness is reduced to some lively but predictable Mexican and Oriental stage scenes, and to the idea of Eldorado as a bore ("Every day is like the other... No place is found for the brilliant satirical scenes in Paris and Portsmouth. Worst of all, the musical has a happy ending. Candide and Cunegonde stay just as pretty and just as much in love as ever (in the book, of course, in John Butt's translation, "his wife grew daily uglier, and became more and more cantankerous and insufferable"). "I, fair cultivator, noisier jardin" becomes a celebration of togetherness, not a retreat into the only realistic means of survival.

Peter Farago's production takes with both hands every opportunity for being loveable and easy. The tone is set by Nicholas Grace, who doubles as Voltaire and Pangloss, and plays other parts, too. His Voltaire is a nice funny old dear with a Spike Milligan voice, and his Pangloss is a nice funny wild-eyed eccentric. The same simplicity obtains throughout. Rosemary Ashe belts out her numbers as a red-headed Cunegonde who never shows the slightest trace of precocious innocence; William Relfon is endearingly pretty and athletic as Candide, and there is a fine flamboyant not-so-old lady from Nichola McAuliffe. Elvirado is represented by two sweet pink singing sheep, Cadiz by three laughing Spaniards playing carols. Constantinople by a belly dancer. Candide even sets out on his travels shouldering a red-spotted bandana handkerchief on a stick. All this went down well, and it seemed to be the best way of treating the material. But comparisons with the RSC's *Nicholas Nickleby* suggest that there are more interesting and original ways of staging a picaresque narrative, and with *Sweeney Todd* (in better, if less cheerful show by the same team of Sondheim, Prince and Wheeler) that musicals don't have to be as cosy as *Candide*.

The company's keenness to endear itself to the audience suits *Candide*, but it doesn't pay off so well in Clive Perry's unintelligent, showy production of *As You Like It*. The decision to dress the play in Regency costumes seems pointless and constricting, and has not been thought through. In the court scenes, the actors drag themselves about inside High Dorian's spectacularly feathered hats and long trains. In the forest, the excited court's lavish display of furs, silks and leathers, and the shepherdesses' Laura Ashley-style smocks, put paid to any sense of real rusticity. To equate the forest of Arden with an eighteenth-century cultivated pastoral is to pull against the Elizabethan use of the natural "desert" as an educative antidote to social artifice. Apart from its allowing Rosalind to take snuff, there seems little point in the historical transposition. Nor is it consistent: Touchstone, absurdly, remains an Elizabethan clown in motley. Grant Hossack's music, far from attempting any eighteenth-century flavour, seems to have modelled itself on *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and would have done better for an *As You Like It* on ice. "Blow, blow, thou winter wind" is not made sense of by leagthy, banal numbers, hovering derivatively between rock and pop, coarsely sung and accompanied by a very loudly amplified recorded band.

These horribly obtusive and mis-judged stylistic effects go with a generally crude approach to the words. It is the sort of production which leans heavily on old gags (the Duke claps Adam on the shoulder, he falls over; Le Beau is a silly pansy; Sir Oliver Martext is a ridiculously eccentric stumbles) and in which every joke must have its visual analogue. Nicholas Grace's fidgety, self-indulgent, over-explanatory Touchstone is the worst culprit. When he says "I am to be damned, like an ill-roasted egg", there is, sure enough, great play with a real egg. When Touchstone complains that not to have one's verses understood is worse than "a great reckoning in a little room", he makes expressive gestures of being constipated, then checks to make sure the audience has understood. The habit is general. When Jacques is reported weeping over the wounded deer, one of the courtiers has to "be" the deer, and so on. These condescending explanations put me in mind of the National Theatre's of Rumania's Edinburgh production of *The Girl from Andorra*, in which the company, in their anxiety to be understood, frantically (and

sometimes brilliantly) mine their way through every word of the comedy. But *As You Like It* is not written in Rumanian - though at times you might have thought so, from some of the verse-speaking. There are bad cases of News-Reader's-Shakespeare, particularly from Denis Hawthorne as Duke Senior ("SWEET [are the] USES [of] ADVERSITY") and from John Quenlin's Jacques, who scornfully swallows the ends of all his lines. Important and beautiful speeches, such as Oliver's account of his brother's danger from the snake and the lioness, are rushed through. It is hard for Lynn Dearth's tough, solid, rough-voiced Rosalind to do battle with this production, but she does effect one or two moments (notably the playful "marriage" in Orlando) when the play's depth and delicacy come up through all the noise and fuss.



A pastel drawing by the young Italian artist Francesco Clemente, from the exhibition of his work at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, 23 Dering Street, New Bond Street, W1, until October 10. At his little gallery at 9 Dering Street, d'Offay is showing early watercolours by John Nash.

## Saussurean stemma

By John Sturrock

S/S/S: Structures, Systems, Signs  
BBC Radio 3

Rather than make an opportunistic beeline for Cambridge and for Colin McCabe, this valiantly urbane enquiry into Structuralism and its effects began with Greta Garbo. The programme's author and host, Denis Donoghue, nervous lest his audience might decamp in shock if he was exposed right away to the full blast of the abstractions and alien terminology to come, wooed them to remain the full sixty minutes by paraphrasing at the outset Roland Barthes's mordant essay on the relative allure of Greta Garbo and Audrey Hepburn. Like any two terms of a comparison, their rival faces were, as Barthes read them, at once the same - beautiful - and different; where Garbo was an idea, Hepburn's was an event. Together they marked the passage from Essence to Existence, or from the Platonic to the perishable.

Structuralism, then, with not one but two human faces. After this ear-catching demonstration of how the structuralist mind sets about interpreting the world around it, Professor Donoghue felt free to broach more abstruse matters and to flush out, in conversation with their advocates, the axioms on which structuralism, post-structuralism and deconstruction rest, the arguments and unhappiness these doctrines have given rise to, and how they came to force their way into the university departments of literature in the first place. Of the Cambridge affair we heard hearteningly little, but it cool allusion to "a rather lurid dispute... which was supposed to have something to do with the question of structuralism in the teaching of English Literature." The only participant in that rancorous and unworthy busbush to be called on to speak was Stephen Heath, but he was too full of radiant memories of Paris in the late 1960s to have time for the parochial ructions of Cambridge 1981.

Having won his hour of airtime from the BBC for what is still a fairly arcane subject, Donoghue filled it dangerously full. We were steered at extraordinary speed all the way from Ferdinand de Saussure, who may be said to have started Structuralism, to Jacques Derrida, who has striven so prolifically to end it. But there were too many holes in the story for the second to seem a logical or even a possible outcome of the first. Donoghue went the rounds, extracting short contributions from structuralists, ex-structuralists, intertextualists, deconstructionists, hermeneuticists, but their remarks pulled in different directions so that it never became clear just what was being done to literary studies in the name of Saussure, or why. As he sped on, Donoghue's commentary sounded more and more like a friendly attempt at stitching these miscellaneous offerings together, when we would rather have been appreciating their ex illustrations of his own argument.

Donoghue was hospitable to a fault; he spoke to too many other people, not all of them with anything pertinent to say. It is a pity he didn't put himself forward more and separate the intellectual history more sharply from the exposition of structuralist ideas. He tried to be fair and he was fair, though with a contented subject like this it is nice now and again to be treated to the sound of rising hackles. Only near the end did Professor Donoghue seem to be nettled, by the presumption of Paul de Man, one of Yale University's crack team of deconstructors, who drew an honest but unattractive distinction between his own "professional discourse about literature" and the insignificant literary responses of "the regular reader who wants to read to pass the time of day". Donoghue was not going to see the "regular reader" so casually excluded from the feast and the programme flared valiantly up as he expressed his doubts about where excessive cleverness such as De Man's might be leading us. It made one regret his earlier neutrality.

## Among this week's contributors

PAUL ADDISON is the author of *The Road to 1945*, 1975.

PAUL BAILEY's most recent novel is *Old Soldiers*, 1980.

T. C. BAARER is Professor of Economic History at the University of London.

MICHAEL BILLINGTON's study of Alan Ayckbourn will be published shortly.

PETER BRANSCOME is Professor of Austrian Studies at the University of St Andrews. He is editing Nestor's last plays for the new Austro-German Complete Edition.

MARILYN BUTLER's most recent book is *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background, 1760-1830*, 1981.

W. F. BYNUM is a lecturer in the History of Medicine at University College, London.

TIM DOOLEY is the editor of the poetry magazine, *Green Lines*.

DAVID EDGAR is the author of the Royal Shakespeare Company's dramatization of *Nicholas Nickleby*.

CYRIL ELLISON is Professor of Economic and Social History at The Queen's University, Belfast. His books include *The Piano: a History*, 1976.

DONALD GRABER is editor of *Poetical Writings*, Volume X of *The Works*

of Samuel Johnson, 1977.

HAROLD HOASON is an Honorary Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford.

MICHAEL HOWARD is the Regius Professor of Modern History at the University of Oxford.

DOUGLAS JOHNSON is Professor of French History at University College London. His books include *A Concise History of France*, 1970.

TONY JUDT is the author of *La Reconstruction du Parti Socialiste 1921-1926, 1976*, and *Socialism in Provence*, 1979.

HARMONIE LEE's *Elizabeth Bowen: An Estimation* will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of the TLS.

MICHAEL MASON is a lecturer in English at University College London.

J. MOROUNT CROOK's *William Burges and the High Victorian Dream* was published earlier this year.

EDWIN MORGAN is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Glasgow. His collections of poems include *Star Gaze*, 1979.

JANET MORGAN is the editor of *Richard Crossman's Diaries* of a *Cabinet Minister*, 1976-7, and *The Backbench Diaries of Richard Crossman* which was published earlier this year.

DENIS H. WRONO's *Skeptical Sociology* was published in 1977.

PAULA NEUSS has edited Skelton's *Magnificence* for the Revels Plays. Her edition and translation of the Cornish miracle play *The Creation of the World* is appearing shortly.

DAVID NOXES is a lecturer in English at King's College, London.

JASPER RIDLEY's most recent book, *The History of England*, will be published later this month.

CAROL RUMENS's most recent collection of poems is *Unplayed Music*, 1981.

WILLIAM SCAMMELL's most recent collection of poems is *Yes and No*, 1979.

NICHOLAS SHRIMPTON is a Fellow of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

STUART SUTHERLAND is Professor of Experimental Psychology at the University of Sussex.

J. A. THOMPSON is a Fellow of St Catherine's College, Cambridge.

J. R. VINCENT is Professor of Modern History at the University of Bristol.

D. C. WATT is Professor of International History at the London School of Economics.

DENIS H. WRONO's *Skeptical Sociology* was published in 1977.

## to the editor

## Dostoevsky and the Jews

Sir, - Removing tongue from cheek: I rejoice to concur with David Goldstein (August 26). The Jew in the grey soldier's coat who witnesses Svidrigailov's suicide may or may not be a soldier or ex-soldier; and he may well be a watchman, fireman (though he is not referred to as such in the text) or security guard. I bring out his quasi-comic official position vis-à-vis Svidrigailov; and I found Dr Goldstein's book fascinating because I felt it understood and implied the existence of this kind of comedy in Dostoevsky. Surely there is a Groucho Marx somewhere in our great author, and surely the exchange between Svidrigailov and the Jew reveals it? The point of the scene is that Svidrigailov, as he says, requires an official witness to his act, and finds one in a Jew on guard duty. Dostoevsky's humor, like that of other great writers, does get the better of his more or less odious nationalistic fixations. He, like Dr Goldstein, might well consider my interpretation rubbish; but a creative humorist is seldom conscious of the finer implications of his own joke, or even if he has made one. And a post facto explanation will always sound laboured.

Finally I agree with Dr Goldstein that the scene in the morning mist of Petrovsky Island is eerie, arcane, and even symbolic. But I think it is also extremely funny.

JOHN BAYLEY.  
St Catherine's College, Oxford  
OX1 3NJ.

## Nikolay Zabolotsky

Sir, - In placing excessive trust in the opinions of the two Soviet memoirists whose books he reviews (August 7), Henry Clifford unwittingly does considerable disservice to the great (if, in comparison with Akhmatova, hardly known) Russian poet Nikolay Zabolotsky. He is wrong to refer to a "reasonably full edition of his poems" that appeared in 1957, the year before his death. That exiguous volume gave a lopsided and inadequate picture of his achievement - the first "reasonably full" (still incomplete) editions appeared many years later. Neither then nor in his lifetime was Zabolotsky "restored to favour as a prominent Soviet poet": critics continued to treat him warily, and to the public he was little known. Far from being loaded with honours, Zabolotsky received only one far-from-weighty award, for his drudgery at translation from the Georgian language, and his acceptance of this would hardly seem to merit the casualness with which it is reported.

It was not the case that "his verse was now thoroughly acceptable" in 1957 (nor, incidentally, had his reputation been made "twenty years earlier"). If quick publication is an index of "acceptability" in Soviet conditions, Professor Clifford should check on how many of Zabolotsky's best later poems waited for years - even till after his death - before appearing in print. The quality of this verse is obviously a matter of opinion, and doubtless has its unevennesses, but I think we should keenly resist that scurrilous judgment that "behind his impressive manner... could be sensed a disingenuousness, even a downright falsehood". Zabolotsky's late poetry never strives to be "impressive", and its ambiguities are of a different and more poetic order. This is true even of the one relatively weak poem adduced as evidence (and rather mischievously analysed) in Professor Clifford's article.

Soviet memoirists - even the best-intentioned of them - have their own axes to grind, and often seem to show a rather schoolmarmish tendency to pigeonhole those they write about in a hierarchy of esteem. We

should resist the temptation to follow them in "playing off" such great, but utterly dissimilar writers as Akhmatova and Zabolotsky against each other. In particular it is sad that Zabolotsky - who, goodness knows, is scarcely a household name among poetry-lovers - should be belittled by extra-literary insinuations.

R. R. MILNER-GULLAND.  
School of European Studies, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9QN.

## Keeping up Greek

Sir, - I am sorry to have to put J.H.C. Leach (August 21) right, after his kind reference to my father's *Some Oxford Translations*. But Richard Jenkyns's recollections were correct. The 3rd Impression (1946) of Kennedy's *Shorter Latin Primer*, gives the line as "Pulum, cum, and ex and e".

MARTIN HIGHAM.  
Crayke Castle, York YO6 4TA.

## 'Structuralism or Criticism'

Sir, - There is, I would agree with John Sturrock (August 28), a "fatal gap" between what authors believe they have written and what readers, even highly intelligent readers, understand. But he attributes to me a number of opinions I don't hold and which I'm prepared to swear that I never expressed when writing my *Structuralism or Criticism*. And as I am also now a reader of my own book, I think I can argue this text in hand.

A long section of chapter 3 (pages 83-91), far from advocating the establishment of "consensual readings of literature, in which all readers of good will should concur", acknowledges the extreme diversity of judgments of value in matters of art and I speak here of the "volatile nature of taste, when it's not ruined by a sense of what one ought to enjoy". I maintain that there remains a sense, none the less, in which value judgment is "objective" but this is a very different matter, as I also go on to argue.

Mr Sturrock also says that I want to restore a "Romantic concept of authorship whereby the creator of a work is held to be in total and undying command of its every rightful meaning". I never said or would want to say anything like that and I admit that we frequently lose control over, plagiarize and generally fool around with the words we utter or write. How could one deny it? My point is simply that the recognition itself that this is how words are being used in a particular instance is an attribution of one kind of intention (unconscious, possibly) rather than another. Such an attribution of intention may or may not be correct but it is intrinsic to the assumption that we understand that the words mean something and what they mean or that they are meaningless or a deception or significant in ways of which the writer or speaker is not consciously aware. Mr Sturrock might also have mentioned that I discuss (pages 55-62) some of the ways in which attribution of intention can be verified.

Finally, may I answer the point that I fail to define structuralism and contrast it disadvantageously in my title with criticism. The self-proclaimed structuralists mean by the term so many different things that a cogent account of common features is impossible. But there is one version which is still influential, even if to the post-structuralists it may appear old-fashioned; and this is the would-be "science of signs" postulated by Saussure and treated with the utmost seriousness by Lévi-Strauss and by Roland Barthes in the 1960s. I describe this as clearly as I can (pages 12-26) and, like the later Barthes, I happen to regard it as impracticable. This and the other

versions of structuralism and semiology tend on the whole to distinguish themselves from what I take to be "criticism" by their disregard for authorial intention and their systematic (even if systematically subversive) "misreading" of texts, as Barthes puts it in *SSZ*. One may be a good critic, as I think Barthes is, even when trying to be a semiologist, but the two ambitions need to be distinguished and the ambition to be a good critic (at the present time) to be defended. My book was intended not so much as an attack on "structuralism" as an examination of what the distinction entails.

GEOFFREY STRICKLAND.  
Department of French Studies, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading RG6 2AA.

## New Jersey Resorts

Sir, - It is always comforting to find someone else joining in to help David Lodge get his facts straight, but Pyke Johnson, Jr (Letters, August 14), writing from Old Greenwich, Connecticut, has apparently forgotten the existence of those famed and notable seaside resorts at Cape May, Wildwood, Ocean City and Atlantic City. New Jersey may not be good for much else, but people certainly do vacation there.

ERIC HOMBERGER.  
School of English and American Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ.

## 'The Jester Hennets'

Sir, - A point of information concerning one of the poems that Gavin Ewart referred to in his clear and comprehensive review of *The Jester Hennets* (August 28). He quoted some lines from "But With Marx at the Square against Saturn" and commented that he could not understand how someone could ever say "tumble in blind". The very lines he quoted contained the word "zooz" (for "those"), a clue, with others, that the whole should be read in a strong Mittel-European accent. The Astrologer, whom Rex subverts, is a vulgar Marxist.

EDMOND WRIGHT.  
75 Canliffe Close, Oxford OX2 7BJ.

## 'Labyrinths'

Sir, - An interesting and curiously Borgesian anomaly appears in the new King Penguin edition of Jorge Luis Borges's *Labyrinths*. In the introduction by André Maurois translated from the French by Sherry Morgan, the following passage from the short story *Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius* is quoted - "with its architectures and quarrels, with the terror of its mythologies and the up-roar of its languages". In the full text of that same story published in the edition, but translated straight from the Spanish by James Iry, a quite different version appears - "with its architecture and its playing cards, with the dread of its mythologies and the murmur [sic] of its languages". Thus one translator's "quarrels" is another's "playing cards" and "up-roar" is reduced to "murmur". I suspect that the author himself would appreciate this example of academic fallibility.

TERRY HUNT.  
11a Letchworth Street, Tooting, London SW17.

D. J. Enright (24 September), T. Carmi (27 Sept.), Roy Fisher and John Mole (1 October), Ian McEwan (5 Oct.), Tony Harrison (6 Oct.), Peter Jay and Herbert Lomas (8 Oct.), A. J. Purdy (13 Oct.) and John Irving (19 Oct.), are among the poets and novelists reading at the Poetry Society, 21 Ears Court Square, SW5, over the next six weeks.

## T.L.S. subscriptions

The surest, most convenient way to get the TLS each week is to take out a subscription. Our new subscription service now located at the address below will provide all subscribers quickly and regularly with their weekly copy of the paper, which remains an incomparable guide to new and recent books published all over the world. New subscribers are invited to begin here, by filling in the coupon below.

## NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The following postal zones are listed for your convenience. If your country is not included, please contact your local postal authority to ascertain your correct zone as specified by the British Post Office.

United Kingdom only by surface mail.  
6 months (26 issues) £12.50  
12 months (52 issues) £25.00.  
British Postal Zone 'A' including Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.  
6 months (26 issues) £23.40.  
12 months (52 issues) £46.80.  
British Postal Zone 'B' including Argentina, Bermuda, Brazil, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Zambia, Zimbabwe.  
6 months (26 issues) £26.52.  
12 months (52 issues) £53.04.  
British Postal Zone 'C' including Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Taiwan.  
6 months (26 issues) £29.12.  
12 months (52 issues) £58.24.  
Europe including Cyprus, Gibraltar, Malta.  
6 months (26 issues) £20.80.  
12 months (52 issues) £41.60.  
By Air Freight, USA and Canada only  
£35.00 - \$70.00 (US dollars only) per annum.

Please send me *The Times Literary Supplement*
☐ 6 months ☐ 12 months

Please print

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

I enclose my cheque for ..... made payable to Times Newspapers Ltd

Signature.....

Date.....

Return this coupon to Times Newspapers Ltd, Supplements Subscription Manager, Oakfield House, 35 Perryman Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 3DH.

LAI



## A version of Versailles

By Lindsay Duguid

LOUIS AUCHINCLOSS:

*The Cat and the King*  
183pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.  
£3.50.  
0 297 77891 3

Louis Auchincloss's latest novel, set in France at the time of Louis XIV, is dedicated to "Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis who persuaded me that Versailles was still a valid source for fiction". The recommendation to some extent explains why he has chosen this setting for his twenty-second novel. The lure of high society, whether ancient or modern, has always been something he has found difficult to resist.

*The Cat and the King* is the Duke de Saint-Simon's personal history, "a record of the thing above all else I had resolved to keep out of my memoirs - namely myself." It purports to be the true record of what lay behind his more famous chronicle of the reign of the Sun King and is presented as an informal self-portrait which incidentally sheds light on the known facts of history somewhat in the manner of Mary Renault's novels (or, more recently, Gore Vidal's *Creation*). There is some play with the leather chest in which the memoirs are to be stored but the book does not have any sort of false "editor's note" explaining how the Duke's papers came to be found. Little time is wasted on any historical preamble and Saint-Simon introduces himself as a lousy, venal, arrogant, repulsive with power and concerned with the preservation of hierarchy. One of his reasons for writing has been a desire to preserve a memory of the old order: "But have I not heard a young niece of my wife's cousin, Louise de la Vallière with Madame de Montespan?"

This faintly homsepic coultier (1) has known plenty of women including the great Madame de Maintenon, the king's morganatic spouse, who are capable of being bad-tempered, even when everything is going their way" picks his way skillfully through the factions and alliances at court in order to obtain status and influence. He is helped by his wife Gabrielle, who provides the motivating power and some disconcertingly astute observations. The nefion turns on issues such as the legitimization of the royal bastards, the advisability or otherwise of proposed marriages, and the conduct of some very off-stage foreign wars. These provide the material for Saint-Simon's truths about the sovereignty of the royal house and the fallibility of the king. There are also many minor plots, intrigues and pieces of gossip concerning such figures as Monsieur, Mousieigneur, Conii, Madame de Montespan and the Duc de Savonne who are known to us from the history books but who are here described with a mixture of respect and cynicism which nicely points up the strange combination of rigid etiquette and gross familiarity which characterizes the court.

Louis XIV himself is portrayed as an effigy of regal dignity and power, whose authority almost justifies the deferential deference paid by Saint-Simon and the courtiers. He is a great man with no apparent personality who induces awe by virtue of his kingship.

The king seemed never to slumber, never to be reduced, like the rest of us, to an 'er' or an 'ah'. He chewed his words like his food, slowly and deliberately. Had I not had carefully to watch my step in keeping abreast of his chair, I should not have taken my fascinated gaze from those great glassy eyes (I attempted now to convey to the king some sense of the satisfaction that these compliments brought me, but he raised his hand to indicate that he wished to continue).

The lecher and concubine, even the *chaise percée* of this figure, make an admirable centre for the eddies of gossip and intrigue which swirl round him.

Another factor which saves Saint-

Simon's concerns from seeming altogether ludicrous is the palace of Versailles itself. The glittering splendours are not described in detail, but there is an impression of myriad apartments, of endless corridors and, above all, of the great formal gardens which provide an image of civilization and its discontents. "It was as if some long tentacle of Le Notre's landscape gardening had reached out to recapture me from the tangled wilderness... across grassy swards and gravelled paths, up steps, past fountains and over terraces, the patterns becoming more meshed, more rigid, more complicated as I proceeded until I was delivered safely back to the heart of the great palace itself."

This is really as far as Auchincloss goes in evoking the era, and he has made a decision to have the characters speak in modern dramatic American ("Madame de Maintenon drop-

ped her like a hot potato as soon as she picked up the last whiff of her afternoon order, order, order - like those potted gravel walks on there") which sometimes approaches the ridiculous. The family row, parties and weekends (Madame is described as though it were an exclusive New England country club, and the ladies with bad reputations familiar from Auchincloss's earlier novels, terral the Cabots rather than the Bourbons. But perhaps because Savonne is so clearly the Harvard room-mate and the throne room the Oval Office, the politicking comes through strongly. In the end Auchincloss appears to have taken little advantage of the setting so kindly suggested by Mrs. Onassis. His interest is in the more universal workings of ambition and, ignoring his torrid colour, he uses his unbridled skills to make the concerns of the characters worth taking seriously on their own terms.

## Making bad

By Stoddard Martin

JOSEPH BELLESTRI:

*The Sins of the Fathers*  
142pp. New York: Carlton Press.  
\$7.75.  
0 81862 1612 3

Angelo Ursino is born in Sicily in 1927, the year the Irish powers of Boston try Sacco and Vanzetti. Angelo's father, Mario, emigrates to America shortly after his son's birth. Mario expects to send for the family as soon as he is established, but the Depression intervenes, and it is not until 1946 that Angelo arrives in "the promised land". Used to the grinding poverty of Sicily, Angelo looks on with admiration as his father, who has made good running shrimp boats, hurries his way into the customs building and whisks his son off in a shiny new Chrysler.

The promised land is not a paradise, however. In America, it turns out, crime and violence are "practically synonymous" with Sicilians. In the way that usury and greed were in Europe with the Jews. The young man cannot get into medical school, in spite of the fact that he has a bachelor's degree from the finest university in the old country. Quickly he grows to resent the ignorant prejudice against his "nation of heroes, explorers, saints, poets, scientists and artists". He falls under the spell of Don Cuesne Corso, business partner of his father and power-broker in New Orleans.

Don Cuesne is five-foot-two and has paintings of Napoleon on his wall. He dresses sharply, is "a man of the world", and loves "the seduction of women of all ages". In him Angelo imagines the signs of greatness: "If he had channelled his ener-

gies towards orthodox, legitimate enterprises no telling what heights he might have reached: Secretary of State, Governor, Manager of General Motors, even President." But, when circumstances favoured Napoleon and Mussolini, they have "framed" Don Cuesne to be merely local chief of the Mafia.

This godfather justifies the activities of "one of the most powerful, secret, vengeful, self-righteous organizations in the world" on the grounds of ethnic discrimination. He rejects liberal rhetoric in favour of action: "Violence is the mother of civilization". His faith is in "a personal God that rewards daring, aggressiveness, even annihilation of one's enemies". Ultimately, when a pair of Irish brothers from Boston gain the Presidency and Attorney Generalship and try to run mafiosos out of the country, he responds by organizing a vendetta that, were this not fiction, would answer the questions still haunting Americans about the events of November 22 1963.

Like Angelo, Joseph Bellestri is a Sicilian-born American working in the medical industry. His novel is not sophisticated; it is the sort of *crê de couleur* that rises periodically from those for whom the "melting pot" has become a cauldron of race competition. In its polemical directness, its speed, its sincerity and vividness (especially in the first part, describing Sicily), *The Sins of the Fathers* sometimes reads like Jack London. In evocations of a young man's encounters with Catholic dogma, lust, and the indignities of the uneducated conscience of his race, it also echoes Joyce of *A Portrait of the Artist*. But, while Bellestri has the same admiration for learning as these writers, and a similar love-hate relationship with his native people, his yearning is for parochial vindication through the acts of a strong man rather than for cultural universality.

As it turns out, the more the real Hollywood shows through, the less satisfying the portrait becomes. The author's assumption (a common one) seems to be that since Hollywood put fantasy on an anonymous, mass-production basis, the results can be freely re-arranged by the inspired do-it-yourselfer. In the era of "faction" and "dramadoc", it might be pedantic to complain about this mixture of fact and fiction, or fiction randomly studied with fact. But in re-fantasticizing the fantasy factory, Ms Grumbach allows herself the licence of fiction without taking on the responsibility, ie to find revised truth out of the revised subject. Alas, the subplot in the title that ladies who surrender to being shadows on the silver screen, mere figures in other people's fantasies, also surrender their sense of self. Flatly stated, this is just a literary gloss on the supersti-

## Fairy-tale fuzz

By T.J. Bluyon

ED MCBAIN:

*Rumpelstiltskin*  
241pp. Hamish Hamilton, £6.95.  
0 241 11522 6

Even Hunter, aka Ed McBain, aka Carl Camron, aka Hunt Collins, aka Ezra Hannon, aka Richard Marsten, is best-known under the first of these pseudonyms in criminal circles. It is as Ed McBain that he has written over thirty novels about the policemen of the 87th Precinct in a city not unlike New York. It's a series which ranks high in the police procedural genre: well-plotted, wittily written, realistic in its detailed account of police work and its descriptions of the underside of contemporary urban life in America. If the books have a fault, it's that the policemen - hand-some Steve Carell with his beautiful blond and dumb wife, rookie Ben Kling, bald, clever, sadistic Annly Parker - are made up of far more inextricably fictional material than the surroundings in which they live and work.

Recently, however, McBain has gone off on a new tack and begun another series in which the central figure - and the narrator - is a Florida lawyer, Matthew Hope. In the first of the series, *Goldilocks*, a client's wife and his two small daughters are murdered with a kitchen knife; Hope helps the police with their investigations and simultaneously his marriage collapses. In *Rumpelstiltskin* he begins an affair with Vicky Miller, a once popular singer who is attempting a comeback. She is found bludgeoned to death

after the first night they spend with one another; her young daughter is kidnapped, later murdered. Initially a suspect, Hope graduates to honorary detective, discovers the vital clue which solves the mystery, and in the end of the novel is well on his way towards renewed domestic felicity with Dale O'Brien, a busy law attorney with ruset (his word) hair and green eyes.

*Goldilocks* seemed to be making a bid to be a more serious work than McBain's earlier novels, with its stern denial that instant Florida happiness could be achieved through the simple process of divorce and remarriage. *Rumpelstiltskin* sentimentally denies this conclusion, and in many ways seems a disappointing come-down, not only from its predecessor, but also from the 87th Precinct series. The emotional mushiness, earlier strictly confined to the descriptions of Steve Carell's family life, now permeates the entire novel, and, with the change from third to first person narration, there is no longer the possibility of keeping a under control with an objective, distancing, narrative wit.

The titles of the novels suggest that they are to be taken as contemporary fairy tales - an ill-defined genre, with more disasters per square yard than any other - but nothing else about them bears out this supposition, nor indeed are there any parallels between the plots of the original tales and those of the novels. Then, of course, parallels between the two novels themselves: through why in each the author should choose to kill off a mother and her female child/daughter is perhaps a question into which a reviewer should not probe. But merely hope for a speedy return to the 87th Precinct.

## Stealing the soul

By Richard Combs

DORIS GRUMBACH:

*The Missing Person*  
252pp. Hamish Hamilton, £7.95.  
0 241 10600 5

One thing that won't be said, by way of sidelong recommendation for Doris Grumbach's Hollywood novel, is that it is more enjoyable if one recognizes the real tinsel personalities behind her tinsel fictions. There is no prize for guessing that the novel's heroine, one Franny Fuller, is Marilyn Monroe, and only a passing grade for twiggling that characters like Delphine Leay and Willis Lord are stand-ins for Greta Garbo and John Gilbert. That these contemporaneous stars can be made to co-exist in the novelist's firmament is a clue to her purpose: this is a generalized portrait of Hollywood, and FF (although her sequence of husbands, from a sports to a literary hero, seems strictly cribbed from MM) is claimed as an identikit of "the women America often glorifies and elevates, and then leaves suspended in their lonely and destructive fame".

Along with Ms Grumbach's simplification goes the kind of writing which glibly incorporates film terminology. Thus, Eddie Puritan, the man who launches Franny's career but also values her as a person, is "the agent of her real self, the slate man for all her inner takes", and Franny, we are told in the last paragraph, "lingers in the umbra before celluloid eternity and the accident of mortality... destined, like everyone else, for the final take on the shores of darkness". Nevertheless, there is production in this prose: a careful purity of characters, one chapter each, surrounded by an implied emptiness, to place of the usual crowded Hollywood narrative, this has the melancholy air, appropriately enough, of an underpopulated landscape. It is in style which comes into its own not in Hollywood but in the descriptions of Dempsey Butts, growing up in Iowa. Here simple values are etched with an almost surreal clarity between Norman Rockwell and Edward Hopper. But attractive as this occasionally is as a picture, it doesn't add up to a whole vision.

Thus belief that photography steals the soul. And flatly stated is all it is here.

With so thin a theme, it is not surprising that the re-invented details come out as superficial window-dressing. The effect is vaguely foolish when the "fictitious" Lord and Franny sit around discussing actual movies. But the lack of really imaginative recreation is crippling when Franny comes to make a film written by her poet-husband (the Monroe film Miller film *The Mist* is lamely translated as *The Lonely Quest* or when the Actors' Studio "Method" becomes "The Way Theory of Acting"). This kind of flutuous substitution, implying that one title means as much or as little as any other when everything is a false front, looks very shabby compared to, say, Norman Mailer's biography of Monroe, in which the nevelistic theme of the missing person is engaged with a more complex sense of the relationship between an actress and her roles.

Mark, Weber, and Durkheim have appropriately been called the "Holy Trinity" of contemporary academic sociology. Abercrombie, Hill and Turner remain as completely as the theorists whom they criticize within the confines of the church in seeking to ground their criticisms in a reading and reinterpretation of the scriptural texts. They recognize that the Marxist form of the dominant ideology thesis finds its initial variant in the famous passage of *The German Ideology* beginning with "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas". But the later Marx, they argue, placed far greater stress on what he called in *Capital* "the dull compulsion of economic relations". Weber attempted to show that a religious ideology, Calvinism, had made a crucial contribution to the emergence of the spirit of capitalism; yet he contended in the very same essay that later capitalism no longer needed the support of religious motives, but had become self-sustaining. "The Puritans wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so," Weber's later views of developed capitalism, as several interpreters have recently shown, were fairly close to those of Marx.

NICHOLAS ABERCROMBIE, STEPHEN HILL, and RYAN S. TURNER:  
*The Dominant Ideology Thesis*  
232pp. Allen and Unwin, £12.50.  
0 04 30117 9.

"It is widely agreed", these authors write, "that the notion of 'ideology' has given rise to more analytical and conceptual difficulties than almost any other term in the social sciences." Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, however, are less concerned to present a more adequate conception than to attack what they see as the exaggerated importance ascribed to ideology by many contemporary social theorists, both Marxist and non-Marxist. The vagueness of the term, especially the citation by some writers of ideology with lists of beliefs which are open to almost infinite expansion, is only one part of this book's argument against the view that the survival of both Leninism and capitalism has depended on the indoctrination of the lower classes in a dominant ideology justifying their subordinate position. Ultimately, one must, I think, face up more directly to the confused meaning of "ideology" itself, even for the limited purpose of explaining the specious plausibility of the theories they rightly reject. Yet their insistence on confronting these theories with a rich array of historical evidence is a mark for contribution as well as being a refreshing change from the arid and portentous juggling of concepts so often passed off as sociological theory.

The historical survey presumably accounts for the presence of three authors in what is quite a slim book. They begin with a summary of several variants of the "dominant ideology thesis" which is their critical target. They choose as representatives of Marxist thought Gramsci, Bahernas and Althusser, undoubtedly the most influential Marxist thinkers of our time to have emphasized the independent significance of ideology and rejected the economic strain in Marxism. The authors of the book note the striking convergence between these fashionable versions of Marxism and the academic sociology chiefly associated with Talcott Parsons which insists on a "common culture" of shared values and beliefs as the fundamental cohesive force holding modern societies together. Both approaches, they argue, are at variance with the "classical" sociological tradition of Marx, Durkheim and Weber: "Contemporary sociological interpretations have, in effect, misread Weber and Durkheim in the same way that Lukács and Korsch 'Hegelianized' Marx, with the result that... the superstructure of values and beliefs is emphasized at the expense of economic structure."

These authors are true children of post-natalist late-twentieth-century Europe in their rejection of the efforts of neo-Durkheimian sociologists to identify substitutes for religion in patriotic ceremonies. But Durkheim wrote in an age of rising nationalism which produced two world wars whose historical impact has been greater than all the class struggles since the rise of industrial capitalism added together. The authors barely mention nationalism, but what about its possible status as a dominant ideology, granting that the contemporary theorists they criticize also neglect it? Does "ideology" include only beliefs about "social systems" or the form of social institutions, and exclude passionate commitments to a concrete society whatever its past and present social structure? These authors treat religion as ideology in discussing rural Christianity and bourgeois Protestantism, so it is hard to see why nationalism is underserving of their attention.

The core of the book consists of two chapters testing the dominant ideology thesis against the historical examples of high feudalism and early capitalism, and one chapter assessing the sociological evidence on late (that is, contemporary) capitalism. All three are largely confined to British society and consider separately the outlooks of dominant and subordinate classes. Not surprisingly, the authors conclude that under feudalism there was a gulf between the religious and chivalric values of the nobility and the pre-Reformation paganism of the peasantry. They pick their way with skill across the crowded terrain of recent scholarship on nineteenth-century Britain, concluding that the working class never underwent a process of "ideological incorporation" by the bourgeoisie af-

ter the decline of Chartist. There was a dominant ideology in both of these social orders, but it served to unify the dominant classes only. The lower classes endured rather than affirmed their circumstances and preserved an indigenous, though only partly oppositional, culture of their own. Working-class culture converged in some respects with that of the bourgeoisie in Victorian England, but not because of imposition by the latter. The authors pay particular attention to the values of the dominant classes with respect to sexuality, marriage, descent and inheritance, crucial matters for the perpetuation of the system when the mode of production depended as it did on private property in land or capital.

The absence of effective agencies for transmitting ideology - Marx's "means of mental production" - largely accounted for the lack of ideological consensus under feudalism and early capitalism, and the resultant reliance on political repression and economic coercion to keep the lower classes in their place. Contemporary capitalism presents a different picture. The apparatus of ideological transmission has expanded enormously with the development of the mass media and compulsory universal education. The authors remain firmly on the level of high theory, but, in conjunction with the decline of crude repression and the whip of hunger, the expansion of the means of communication lends plausibility to the common left-wing complaint about "brainwashing" by "the media" and pervasive "false consciousness". Significantly, early Marxists impelled the latter to the world-view of the bourgeoisie whereas later Marxists impelled the latter to the world-view of the proletariat. The authors minimize his major thesis by writing dismissively of his "hankering after mechanical solidarity" and suggesting that his last book has relevance only to primitive societies - as if Durkheim did not seek out "the elementary forms of the religious life" precisely because he thought they disclosed the essence of a universal phenomenon. The issue is not whether Durkheim was right; only whether he is accurately represented as one who minimized the binding force of common values in modern societies.

Paradoxically, the improved means of ideological dissemination have coincided, the authors argue, with a decline in the coherence of a dominant ideology itself, even one affirmed only by the dominant classes. Marxists, they show, disagree among themselves and are disagreeably vague about the core beliefs of allegedly unifying contemporary capitalism. A traditional defence of private property exists alongside meritocratic legitimations of inequality in no way presuppose either private property or production for a market. The separation of ownership and management is a feature of large corporations, even if it has not led to the far-reaching changes forecast by earlier analysts who correctly diagnosed it as a trend some decades ago. The greater involvement of the state, both directly in capital accumulation and indirectly through social services determining the conditions of "private" economic activity, is no longer resisted in principle. The decline of what Daniel Bell calls "family capitalism" undermines both economic individualism and the domestic morality which were prime articles of bourgeois faith in the last century. More permissive sexual and personal mores no longer threaten the stability of the capitalist mode of production, while individual family ownership and control of the means of production cease to prevail in the major sectors of the economy.

But these developments do not portend a heightened class struggle accompanied by large-scale defections from support for capitalism by the dominant classes, for capitalism has never required ideological consensus in order to survive. Marx himself never held that a fully realized oppositional class consciousness on the part of the proletariat was a

sufficient condition for the transition to socialism in the absence of the breakdown of capitalism and increasing material misery suffered by the workers. The most brilliant capsule statement about capitalism I know is Ernest Gellner's remark that if it didn't exist, no one would have bothered to invent it. Nor need its continued existence depend on general belief in its ultimate goodness and justice. The confusion of this effort of *The Dominant Ideology Thesis* is doubtless even more due to the rejection of the claim that the system is sustained by the over-powering "ideological hegemony" of the bourgeoisie. The authors note the obvious anti-radical effect of improved material rewards: workers toiled clearly have more to lose than their chains, and Marxian denunciations of uneducated "false" material needs do not gateway the fact that, as they inequally rearm, "after all, a washing machine is a machine for washing clothes which has real advantages". They also comment on the increased expectation of life, so often forgotten in these discussions. Thus "economism" is not false consciousness and "reformism" has produced real, tangible benefits for the working class. They recognize that there is widespread working-class support for neo-fascist standards justifying inequality, but note also the frequency of denials that these standards actually govern the distribution of wealth and income in contemporary Britain. They do not overlook the negative demonstration effect of totalitarianism on the Soviet model in weakening the appeal of total opposition to capitalism. They conclude that "subordinating little normative involvement and accounts for the incoherence of their value system".

Capitalism, then, is essentially a condition to which people accommodate themselves, rather than the embodiment of a theory or ideology which they affirm. But this brings us back to the question of what we mean by "ideology", a question not sufficiently dealt with by these authors despite their appendix on the concept itself, which turns out to be largely confined to discussing (and rejecting) the traditional Marxist equation of ideology with a false or "mythified" view of reality.

Ideology is conventionally understood as a relatively systematic and explicitly formulated conception of society and history that includes both factual claims about their essential nature and prescriptions for action, especially political action, inferred from the claims. Few people other than some neo-classical economists and publicists for trade associations believe in capitalism as an ideology in this sense; it is usually evaluated by its concrete results. The various theorists of a dominant ideology forecast by earlier analysts who correctly diagnosed it as a trend some decades ago. The greater involvement of the state, both directly in capital accumulation and indirectly through social services determining the conditions of "private" economic activity, is no longer resisted in principle. The decline of what Daniel Bell calls "family capitalism" undermines both economic individualism and the domestic morality which were prime articles of bourgeois faith in the last century. More permissive sexual and personal mores no longer threaten the stability of the capitalist mode of production, while individual family ownership and control of the means of production cease to prevail in the major sectors of the economy.

But these developments do not portend a heightened class struggle accompanied by large-scale defections from support for capitalism by the dominant classes, for capitalism has never required ideological consensus in order to survive. Marx himself never held that a fully realized oppositional class consciousness on the part of the proletariat was a

Even the bourgeois individualism and strict domestic moral codes which the authors see as having united the dominant class under early capitalism did not truly constitute a "capitalist ideology". Tom Mottram, in his foreword, qualifies the authors' overall thesis by suggesting that nationalism and the "ideology of achievement" have at least had the "negative influence" of inhibiting the development of a subaltern class. I think he is right about nationalism, but the achievement principle does not necessarily presuppose a capitalist economy, although it may have been historically associated with, and even have contributed to, its rise. "Bourgeois individualism", including belief in individual achievement, a work ethic, and "deferred gratification", may even be invoked in support of a non-racist form of socialism against the late capitalism that is held to have undermined it.

Abercrombie, Hill and Turner insist in their appendix that "ideology" must be seen as a category of consciousness in order to make a discordance between belief and practice theoretically possible. I think it must be seen in an even more restricted sense as a particular kind of category of consciousness. They are in this passage objecting to Althusser's extension of ideology to embrace "practices" as well as beliefs. Althusser here converges strikingly with Parsons, who tended to regard all regularities in motivated human action as expressions of internalized values acquired through socialization. In both cases, any stable society that is, one not rent by civil war or revolution - must, virtually by definition, rest on values, consensus or commitment to a dominant ideology. Despite the very different political antipathies of the French Communist and the American liberal, they exhibit a common sociological reductionism. *The Dominant Ideology Thesis* should encourage further exploration of this underlying "residue", as Pareto might have called it.

Anthropological approaches to the sciences have developed as part of a broader tradition concerned both about the place of the sciences in today's world and the legitimacy of the sciences. In *Science and Culture* (270pp. Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 90 277 1234 4) the editors, Everett Mendelsohn and Yehuda Elkana, have aimed to present studies that would be suggestive and stimulate further research. Included in this book are articles by Arthur Kleinman on "The Meaning Context of Illness and Care: Reflections on a central Theme in the Anthropology of Medicine", by Yehuda Elkana on "A Programmatic Attempt at an Anthropology of Knowledge", Wolf Lepenies on "Anthropological Perspectives in the Sociology of Science", Peter W. G. Wright on "On the Boundaries of Science in Seventeenth-Century England", Peter Buck on "Science and Modern Chinese Culture" and Robert S. Anderson on "The Necessity of Field Methods in the Study of Scientific Research".

Anthropological approaches to the sciences have developed as part of a broader tradition concerned both about the place of the sciences in today's world and the legitimacy of the sciences. In *Science and Culture* (270pp. Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 90 277 1234 4) the editors, Everett Mendelsohn and Yehuda Elkana, have aimed to present studies that would be suggestive and stimulate further research. Included in this book are articles by Arthur Kleinman on "The Meaning Context of Illness and Care: Reflections on a central Theme in the Anthropology of Medicine", by Yehuda Elkana on "A Programmatic Attempt at an Anthropology of Knowledge", Wolf Lepenies on "Anthropological Perspectives in the Sociology of Science", Peter W. G. Wright on "On the Boundaries of Science in Seventeenth-Century England", Peter Buck on "Science and Modern Chinese Culture" and Robert S. Anderson on "The Necessity of Field Methods in the Study of Scientific Research".

The man who won't get out of bed!  
Nikita Mikhailov's award-winning Russian comedy  
based on Ivan Goncharov's satirical novel  
*Obломov*  
SUBTITLES  
"Don't bring me one can pay... has a refreshing... the perpetually inventive... that he is... a rare... SLOTT & SOUND NEW YORK TIMES  
A Contemporary Films Release  
PARIS PULLMAN Drayton Gardens, SW10  
Tel: 01-373 5898



## Delusions of equality

By Cyril Ehrlich

P.T. BAUER:  
Equality, the Third World and  
Economic Delusion  
293pp. Weidenfeld and Nicholson.  
£15.

P.T. Bauer is a master of the polemical essay, adroit in the deployment of fact and logic to expose fallacy, euphemism, and pretence. It is a destructive skill of course, and thus abhorrent both to his immediate victims and to that great legion of liberal souls in western democracies who, harassed by an ill-defined unease about poverty and inequality, support utopian policies without scrutinizing their origins or credibility. But scepticism is a healthy tradition among liberal economists, and lucid thinking rarer and more useful than propaganda and the offering of elixirs. The latter are prime targets for the present book, which explores a "conspicuous and disconcerting hiatus between accepted opinion and evident reality in major areas of academic and public economic discourse".

Professor Bauer begins with an assault on the "grail of equality" and the "redistribution industry": contrary to popular belief, economic differences are primarily the result, not of faults in social organization, but of individual capacities and motivations. Envy and resentment are ancient sentiments, but their persistent articulation has now conferred upon them a veneer of intellectual respectability, and has even provoked guilt among the successful. Next comes "Class on the Brain", an attempt to rebut the stereotyped thesis that a rigid class system is responsible for most British problems. In fact we have long been an open society without class barriers, and economic or professional achievement. Modern impediments to social mobility are created by bureaucracy, taxation, and restrictive trade unions. Its treatment here is too superficial to be convincing. Despite telling examples and persuasive argument, it fails to consider enough of the relevant literature - Asa Briggs, Harold Perkin, and at least some of the Marxists - to be authoritative.

The substantial central chapters explore myths and realities in our dealings with the Third World. All are disapproving, except for a lively piece on Hong Kong, which achieves economic growth by ignoring the rule-books of development economics. Considerable space is devoted to foreign aid: "a kind of drive-in handout, available on request", touted by United Nations "experts" and wishful-thinking apologists in a continuous production line which has culminated in the Brandt Report, with its meaningless polarization of "North-South" and insistence on large-scale transfers of wealth by international levy. Such procedures, argues Bauer, will bring small benefit to the poor. "Aid" goes to governments, not people, and its main effect is to reinforce the Third World's "politicization" and hostility to the West. Indeed, that confidently labelled entity is merely a heterogeneous assemblage of countries whose governments demand and receive Western aid: "In all other ways the unity or uniformity is pure fiction". Even the allegedly wide and widening "poverty gap", which provides a misleadingly much propaganda, is conceptually and statistically disputable. The inherent dangers of making simple comparisons between national income aggregates, long familiar to competent economists, are commonly brushed aside in the quest for urgent simplicities. The only unambiguously measurable gap between rich and poor nations is life-expectancy, which has narrowed rapidly. As people prefer life to death, lower mortality rates reflect a major improvement in the material condition of poor countries which national income statistics fail to register.

This iconoclasm is pushed hard, but Bauer's argument is documented with some care, and an attempt made to explain the persistence of delusions. Much is attributed to guilt, described rather unkindly as a feeling which "has nothing to do with a sense of responsibility or compassion". Its voracious exponents exhibit more concern "with their own emotional state and that of their fellow citizens", than with the outcome of policies inspired by such sentiments, which damage the West and, more seriously, ordinary people in poor countries. Choice

quotations illustrate the extent to which accusation and guilty response defy caricature. *Guardian* readers have been assured that "a quarter of the world's population lives, quite literally, by killing the other three quarters" (January 3, 1977) and that "social cannibalism... has reduced over three quarters of mankind to begging, poverty, and death, not because they don't work, but because their wealth goes to feed, clothe and shelter a few idle classes in America, Europe and Japan... moneybags in London and New York and in other western seats of barons [sic] living on profit snatched from the peasants and workers of the world" (June 11, 1979).

Momentary quills at a serious writer's stooping to confront such witless displays of radical chic are appeased by Bauer's sobering reflection that they are truly representative expressions of contemporary belief. Further demonstrations of prevailing fashion come from an allegedly weightier source: the Reith lectures on "The African Condition" which blame the West for Africa's present troubles and seek remedies in its decline. Bauer attributes the commissioning of these expensive talks to "the liberal death wish", and their negligible content to a predilection for Newspeak, and to fundamental misconceptions about African economic history. This subject is explored in an essay on British Colonial Africa. Themes are selected deliberately to conflict with

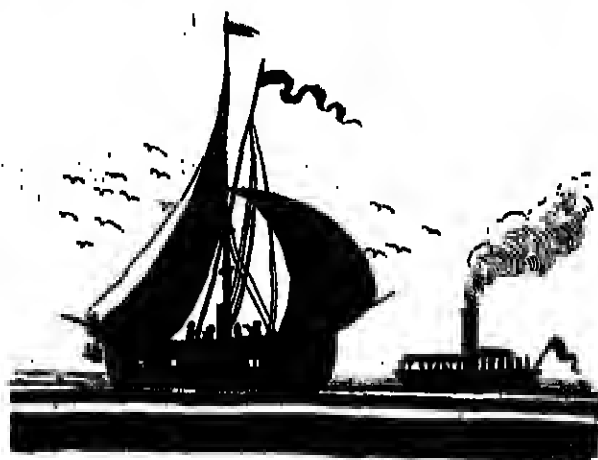
"stereotyped" interpretations, which are attributed to "left-liberal academics and... the importance of the black vote in the United States". External commerce, Bauer argues, was crucial in initiating and promoting economic progress in territories which were quite extraordinarily backward when colonies were established. The extent of transformation was epitomized by the twentieth century as on the twentieth century as (a favourite quotation inadvertently duplicated on pages 108 and 167). After creating cash economies the colonial authorities then imposed comprehensive economic controls, erecting "a framework of quasi-totalitarian regimes" which was handed over to the incoming independent governments. Thus it was the funds of the Gold Coast Mar-keeting Board which enabled Kwame Nkrumah to indulge grandiloquent fantasies in the name of "development" without benefit to the common people. More generally the colonial predilection for controls and government agencies "politicized" (that key-word again) economic life and therefore enabled "kleptocracies" to emerge.

None of this is new. Indeed, readers who are happily innocent of "under-development" theory may regard much of it as commonplace. Unfortunately others will dismiss Bauer's interpretation as obtuse or ill-informed, and he plays into their hands by virtually ignoring the recent historiography of tropical Africa. The high priests of

"underdevelopment" - Walter Rodney, Gunther Frank, and the like - are never mentioned, a deliberate omission, perhaps, but curious since their message is a vital part of that mythology which Bauer sets out to refute. Nor is admiration for an earlier generation of historians, notably Sir Keith Hancock, which any serious Africanist will endorse, adequate reason for appealing to neglect seminal work by such later writers as Polly Hill and Tony Hopkins.

The last four essays bleakly examine the present state of economics. The cult of mathematics is attacked for creating protective facades and equating the quantifiable with the significant - with supporting quotations from Marshall, Keynes, Leontief, and Wiener, none of whom can be dismissed as innumerate. Cheap computing has added confusion by encouraging the mechanical manipulation of data, as against direct observation and critical reflection. Bauer does not discuss the curious rise of "eliometrics", which recently threatened to take over economic history, but he does defend the Muse in a respectful yet critical assessment of Sir John Hicks's *A Theory of Economic History*. Here again one would have welcomed a wider range of bibliographical reference in a discussion of the general problem of historical theory. We can share Bauer's distaste for procrustean models, and echo his belief that worthwhile history requires "the patient and systematic collection of material, and correspondingly methodical examination at some depth of evidence". Sadly, this still needs to be said, but brief references to Popper's *Poverty of Historicism* and the dangers of seeking general historical laws merely whet the appetite for a thorough exposition.

Collections of reprinted essays rarely make wholly satisfactory books. Skilful editing can impose a seeming unity upon diverse themes, but sustained argument is inevitably sacrificed. Even a practised hand can do little more than score debating points, or risk alienating his readers through tedious reiteration. In the present case admiration for wit and intelligence is tempered by regret that a distinguished and prolific economist has not, on this occasion, given us a fresher, more substantial book.



## Transmitting the technology

By T. C. Barker

SIDNEY POLLARD:  
Peaceful Conquest  
The Industrialization of Europe  
1760-1970  
451pp. Oxford University Press.  
£17.50 (paperback, £7.95).  
0 19 877093 6

It is nearly twenty years since Sidney Pollard published his *Development of the British Economy, 1814-1914*, the first book in which he has become well known to generations of students. It is tempting to see in this present work an attempt to repeat this earlier achievement by writing a text-book about European industrialization, a substantial successor to his short, illustrated *European Industrialization, 1815-1870* (1974). But this he has not done. Instead he has produced what is essentially a semi-annual "ideas" volume aimed, it would seem, primarily at academics and based upon wide reading in a number of languages. His bibliography is formidable.

Professor Pollard is at pains to emphasize at the outset that he is concerned solely with Europe's industrialization, not with other aspects of its economic history, and certainly not with its social history. He makes two main assertions: that modern industrialization, started in Britain, was transferred to parts of

the continent whole, without any adaptation; and that the industrialization process, both in Britain and abroad, can be understood only in regional, not national, terms. The first contention may raise some eyebrows (especially as he goes on to allege that even the continental railway systems "were exactly like the British ones"); but the second, already touched upon in an article by him in the *Economic History Review*, provides a salutary corrective to those who write economic history in political terms. Regional, not national, boundaries are relevant to his present purpose.

Pollard analyses the course of industrialization in the various regions of Britain, pointing out that these were all "originally impoverished". Here he links up with... and gives further publicity to, other work on what Franklin Mendels has termed "proto-industrialization". The transmission of the new technology took place first of all to regions of what Pollard calls Inner Europe, the parts situated in its north-west corner nearest to the British Isles. Inner Europe itself filled an intermediate position. Being well advanced in the use of finishing processes, it was already trading with the peripheral areas before developing an industrial momentum of its own. From the 1860s these peripheral areas themselves began to follow the industrial road, though with a greater distance to make up when the take-off arrived. Meanwhile Britain, no longer

able to compete with Inner Europe, which already possessed the new technology, and perhaps lower labour costs, had to look to markets elsewhere for its displaced manufactures.

So far as the nineteenth century is concerned, Pollard reveals himself - rather surprisingly - as a good old-fashioned liberal. He does not believe that government attempts to stimulate industry by protective duties or other means succeeded in promoting industrial growth. (This activity, when it occurred, did so usually for political reasons or in support of some particular vested interest, not of industry in general.) Greater government intervention from the later nineteenth century, certainly for political reasons, had a baleful influence. The movement towards integration, resulting from minimal effective government activity before the 1870s, turned to disintegration thereafter with "protectionist policies down to 1914, and worse between the wars. Only since 1945 has reintegration come about... but separately, in two Europes. The past hundred years, however, are handled much more briefly. Only a third of the book is devoted to them, presumably because little further industrialization (in Pollard's understanding of the term) occurred then.

The boldness of the volume must arouse admiration; but the execution spoils its adventurous concept. Pollard seems to be trying to write

another text-book despite the fact that his book as a whole is clearly aimed at the more advanced reader. There are long and rather tedious descriptions of growth in the various regions as they undergo industrialization in Britain, in Inner Europe and then in the periphery. These obscure, rather than clarify, the main arguments which, of course, are not likely to command universal acceptance.

The significance of the new technology, the plank on which the whole edifice has been built, is surely exaggerated. During much of the nineteenth century the textile machines and steam-engines were only part of the industrialization process even in Britain. Factory chimneys were for long the exception rather than the rule. Britain's change was achieved by using existing methods more efficiently: Road vehicles, for instance, did not disappear with the coming of the railways. On the contrary, horse transport became increasingly important until replaced by motors. (Railways did not release land formerly used for horses as stated here on p. 31; they generated more horse transport.) If the continued use of improved traditional methods was an important part of industrialization in Britain, presumably this was the case on the continent, too, especially in Inner Europe, which was not short of technical skills of the more traditional sort and had indeed passed many of them on to England in earlier times. It is true that coal and iron technol-

ogy demanded particular know-how, and examples are given here of difficulties in applying it; but were the skills of the British and continental workers so different that the latter, given a receptive economic climate, would be any less capable of mastering the new techniques than the British had been in the later eighteenth century in picking up continental methods of, say, plate glassmaking?

This is very much the story of European industrialization seen from the British point of view. No doubt it will stimulate European criticism, which Pollard will be well located to receive now that he has moved from Sheffield to Bielefeld. The Dutch, in particular, may well complain about being banished from Inner Europe on the narrow grounds that their industrialization sat in after 1860, and those who have been impressed by O'Brien and Kayser's reinterpretation of economic growth in France may be justified in wondering whether the British-type coal and iron technology was necessarily the only route to the modern industrial state.

It is unusual to find a scholarly book such as this, especially from the OUP, containing so many printing errors and ill-checked anomalies. Even Professor Pollard's own works appear. Inconceivably, in the end of Chapter Three there is a lonely number sitting encouragingly in the text which has no partner at all among the notes.

## The orders of officialdom

By Douglas Johnson

CHRISTOPHE CHARLE:

Les Hauts fonctionnaires en France au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle  
268pp. Paris: Gallimard/Julliard.  
670pp. Geneva: Droz.

In February 1905 the *carpet mondain* of *Le Figaro* reported a marriage which had just taken place in the church of Sainte Clothilde (the same church where, a few years earlier, Commandant Henry had surreptitiously received the contents of the German military attaché's wastepaper basket, so setting in train the Dreyfus affair). It was between Paul Coudin, formerly of the École Polytechnique and now employed at the Caisse des Dépôts, and André Delatour, daughter of the Director-General of the Caisse des Dépôts. The names of the witnesses and the list of guests offer a detailed guide to the various services of the administration with which the two families had connections: the Ministries of Finance and of War; prefects and tax-collectors; officials of the Banque de France, the Cour des Comptes and the Chambre de Commerce; teachers and former pupils of the École Polytechnique and the École des Sciences Politiques; representatives of the Faculté de Médecine and the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques.

On the occasion of their alliance, the families reveal that their capital consists in their relations, and one soon realizes that the French administration is not only the immovable and inescapable force which constitutes the real government of France, but also that it is made up of various dynasties - an aristocracy which is

acquainted with its most distant cousins and can appraise the extent and the value of their positions. Such a wedding could have taken place under the Directory, the July Monarchy, the Fourth Republic, or even today. The administrative services of France form a permanent élite.

At the time of the terror, Saint-Just was alarmed by another aspect of the administration. No official in France, he claimed, was capable of doing anything by himself, but he was obliged to appoint an "agent secondaire". Every "agent secondaire" in turn needed to have his own subordinates, and thus a whole world is created which devotes its time to writing, to massing dossiers, to creating work for itself. "Le ministère est un monde de papier. Le dictionnaire d'écriture nous fait la guerre, et l'on ne gouverne point". Neither revolution nor reaction have saved France from the danger which Saint-Just describes.

The reference to the marriage at Sainte Clothilde comes from Christophe Charle's collection of documents illuminating the characteristics of the French administration during the nineteenth century, many of which have never been published before and all of which possess a point and a purpose. The quotation from Saint-Just comes from the introduction by Jean Tulard to Guy Thuillier's collection of articles, many of which first appeared in the *Revue administrative*, and all of which discuss those individuals who have written about the French administration or particular aspects of its history, such as conditions of entry, promotion, discipline, method and routine. In spite of its title, this volume has a great deal to say about the twentieth century, especially about the various plans which were considered for the creation of an École Nationale d'Administration.

Both these volumes aptly represent the school of historians who believe that it is through a study of the

administration that one will understand many features of French history, even if one is concerned with specialized aspects of it, such as economics or culture. Their claim is that administrative history - once looked upon as an adjunct to the study of administrative law and as a classified form of history to be classified alongside the eye-winks of diplomacy or the details of military manoeuvres and then forgotten - is a most important element in *la nouvelle histoire*, or that total history where ideas and anthropology meet. We should not merely be told about institutions, we need to know about "mentalities" and psychology, because of the universal obsession with promotion which characterizes the administration (or should one say also, the obsession with security, and note how few French historians of the administration, secure in the fact that as university teachers they are classified as state employees and have tenure, even when they take a job elsewhere, in business or in politics, discuss this aspect of their own situation).

We need to see the administration in terms of the *longue durée*, because ministries survive changes of régime, and if the "Valeurs des préfets" does not occur at every significant change of government - occasionally it is little more than a fox-trail - there is all the more reason to study the mould in which so many officials have been cast. Both these volumes are concerned with the individual and with the everyday life of the post-war, with the ritual of the lowly bureaucrat. From some of M. Charle's documents illustrating the lives of the great mandarins of the profession, we learn how they could be deeply moved by considerations affecting their dignity and their idea of the respect due to their position and rank. In 1882 the Premier Président of the Appeal Court at Chambéry thought it incumbent upon him to accompany the Procureur Général

when that officer left the prize-giving ceremony of the *Jeux municipaux* because the Prefect had been given precedence, in the platform party, over the legal officers. This is not simply a story of two men who did not get on together, but of the difficult relations which existed between the two corps, the judiciary and the executive.

M. Thuillier deals with some aspects which are more difficult to document. In the days of the quill, as we know from Sharvini ("Monologue d'un plumeur"), and when the job of the clerk was simply to copy, it was possible to write of "les bras métalliques par le travail". But Thuillier does not know the date when his pen was "la plume à Bie". He became generally used in the French administration, thereby putting an end to the ritual of the distribution of ink and to the tradition of calligraphy (In 1952 there was a big advertisement campaign on French radio for Bie, and the Tour de France that year was accompanied by repetitions of the song "ils courent, ils courent les points Bie"). It is easier to date the ending of the art of fastening papers together by pins or with string, since Thuillier tells us that paper-clips came into use around 1890. It was in October 1887 that the *Journal des fonctionnaires* reported that "une sorte de piano mécanique dont le clavier produit au lieu de sons, des lettres d'imprimerie" had been installed in the Ministry of Agriculture, but in 1923 it was still necessary for an official report on administrative reform to argue its advantages. With the typewriter there came the presence of women, so that the whole atmosphere of the administrative office changed and a host of new difficulties arose in terms of hierarchy, courtesy, and human relations.

Perhaps Thuillier might have speculated more on why it was that some aspects of administrative life

changed more rapidly than others. Thus in the 1920s he tells us that few officials were capable of dictating a letter, and he quotes a circular of February 1940, recommending officials in the Ministry of War to get used to dictating, though in 1945 there is evidence of a continued reluctance to do so. It is also true that the sanitary arrangements in many ministries were remarkably backward, and Thuillier quotes examples of dramatic inadequacies as late as 1965 (those who worked in the Archives Nationales in the early 1950s will remember that the appearance of toilet paper in the lavatories was so rare as to be startling, and gave rise to the expectation of some notable event, such as the fall of a government). Many of these innovations are only worth recalling if one can at the same time explain their significance. Thus the use of the telephone (and in 1928 a senior civil servant was depicted in a play as being the slave of the telephone) must have humanized the life of many employees. The fact that many officials no longer begin their mornings in their offices by reading the newspaper is more a commentary on the French press than an indication of a change in bureaucratic habits. What is the proud product of the École Nationale d'Administration to read? If he is in the Paris region he can only wait for *Le Monde* to appear in the afternoon.

The virtue of both these books, apart from their intrinsic interest and usefulness, is to demonstrate the rich possibilities of this type of history and the opportunities it offers to those who choose to exploit it. Thuillier's essays on Maupassant, Courmette and Claudel and other administrative careers show us how even the most famous of bureaucrats have, up until now, escaped the researches of the historian, while Christophe Charle demonstrates something of the richness of French provincial records.

## The Republic in person

By Tony Judt

MAURICE AGULHON:

Marianne into Battle  
Republican Imagery and Symbolism  
in France, 1789-1880  
Translated by Janet Lloyd.  
235pp. Cambridge University Press.  
£18.50 (hardback, £6.96).  
0 521 23577 4

There is much to be said for the view that political discourse in France is a sequence of allegorical spectacles, an alternation of symbolic historical floats. A socialist victory produces a spontaneous celebration at the Bastille, and the newly-elected President Mitterrand decrees that the Marseillaise has henceforth played at a faster, more martial tempo. Seven years ago the locus of celebration lay west of the Place de la Concorde and the national anthem was slowed to a pace designed less for mobilization than for reassurance. A century ago one was either for the Republic or against it (Clemenceau). The alternatives change, but their fundamentally manichean and symbolic character remains much as it has been throughout the two centuries since the original forms of discourse were first tentatively proposed.

It is the centrality of official imagery in France, and its essentially dualist nature, which forms the context and the theme of Maurice Agulhon's latest book, now made available in translation as part of the arrangement between Cambridge University Press and the publishing house of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris. Agulhon's particular focus is on the developing central allegory of the political Republic, from the adaptation of classical allegories of liberty and justice at the end of the eighteenth century to the stylized prints and statues of "Marianne" in the last third of the nineteenth.

Nor was it just a matter of clothing and headgear, though these were the dominant symbols. From 1849 onwards (as befits France's leading contemporary historian, Agulhon is at his best in linking subtle changes of symbolic form with the events to which they were both response and stimulus), the tendency among conservatives was to accept the central allegorical identification of the régime with a "symbolic female, but then to remove from the latter all political suggestion" by

transforming her first from Liberty/Republic into Motherland, and thence into France herself. In the matter of statues (and by 1860 these are the chief source for Agulhon's interpretation, forming as they do an integral part of the frenetic urban reconstruction and ever-present image to the urban *flâneur* of Baudelaire and others) this slippage was achieved by surrounding Marianne with all manner of lesser symbols - plough, etc. - designed to detract from the identity of the woman herself. There was a brief interlude around 1871, when southern radicals (and Agulhon demonstrates beyond doubt the essentially meridional origins of Marianne) achieved revenge by placing red caps on statues of the Virgin Mary, so producing an instantaneous symbolic transposition, and again in the late 1870s when previously illicit statues of the real Marianne moved into the town-halls in the wake of republican victories. But by 1880 Marianne had essentially won her battle - and lost her initial identity.

These are but the bare bones of a subtle and wise little book, the first of two (a sequel on Marianne in power is to follow, with an exhaustive study of the official statuary that flourished in the wake of the Republic's definitive establishment after 1880). Agulhon is never tempted to offer a reductive account of political and didactic art, and is sensitive to the autonomy of artistic initiative, almost to the point of underplaying the interaction of art and politics which endured at least up until 1951. He also fights shy of what he terms "socio-psychanalytical reflection", and we are thus spared the confusion of metaphor and reality which histories of this sort are wont to spawn.

Indeed, Agulhon is so modest in his declared intention of attempting an essay in the non-man's land of the history of political imagery, that he offers only two interpretative conclu-

sions. The first is to suggest that the need for Marianne and her competing predecessors arose from three interlocking causes: In a Catholic country it was essential to establish the image of the Republic by exploiting and inverting the familiar image of the Virgin; the residual monarchist and the continuing power of the Church obliged the republicans to offer a cult of the Republic that would be as pervasive and personal as its competition; finally (Agulhon's preferred explanation), France might well have followed the American pattern of venerating successive presidents, in coinage and statutory alike, had it not been for the infortunatous fact that so many of her statesmen, from Robespierre to Louis Napoleon, displayed a disturbing lack of respect for the institutions of the Republic and a propensity for unconstitutional behaviour. Marianne might be hard to identify and of dubious origin, but at least she could not stage a coup d'état.

Agulhon's second interpretation is less satisfying. He cannot avoid coming to terms with the fact that Marianne is a woman, but consistently avoids dealing with the question of why this was the case. He shows well how the *kind* of woman was changed over time, from the exceptional fighter through the standard-bearer in parades to the lively artistic allegory, on stage or in art. In one instance he shows a woman in the 1851 uprising in the Var undergoing instant transformation, from armed militant into revolutionary enthusiasm. But when it comes to accounting for the fact that early nineteenth-century republicans (and socialists) saw their ideal in the classical form of a goddess of liberty, while a later generation of socialists represented their purposes in the symbolic form of a male proletarian, Agulhon beats a retreat. Unlike others who have ventured into such questions, he knows better than to suppose that the allegorical shift re-

flected anything determinate about the popular work-force. With women entering the work-force in growing numbers after 1880, a reductionist political imagery would have had Marienne transformed into the symbol of an emergent working-class after 1880. Instead of retreating into the coy, faux-naïf role she now performs in the political cartoons of *Le Figaro*.

In fact Marianne never had much to do with mass politics, her roots resting overwhelmingly in rural and small-town France south of the Loire. Whether she substituted there for a weakened Catholic church and there is a distinct chronological convergence between the re-emergence of Catholicism in western and north-central France and the implementation of the essentials of the Republican faith in the south - is a suggestion raised by Agulhon, but never properly investigated.

These are questions which ought to receive fuller treatment in Volume Two. In the meantime this odd, allusive book is strongly recommended to all students of French history and popular art alike. Its discursive and modest approach camouflages some very subtle reflections on the nature of interdisciplinary history, and insights into the infrastructure of political debate in modern France. In the solid and four-square world of French academic historiography it is something of a literary Centre Pompidou (not, one imagines, an image altogether to the author's liking) - all scaffolding and imagination, revealing novel perspectives on a once-familiar landscape. In an excellent translation by Janet Lloyd (and Agulhon cannot be easy to render into English, with his impersonal procedures and suggestive, open-ended and misleadingly casual phrasing) this book offers an intriguing introduction to Agulhon's work and it is much to Cambridge's credit that they have brought it to the attention of a wider audience.



# Rehabilitating the stumble-bum

By D. C. Watt

ROBERT A. DIVINE

*Eisenhower and the Cold War*  
181pp. Oxford University Press. £7.50.  
0 19 56282 6

Robert A. Divine is, perhaps, one of the least "school-bound" of the American diplomatic historians, using the term as it is normally used in the United States as meaning historians of American foreign policy. He has written one of the most thoughtful re-evaluations of Franklin Roosevelt. He is the author of an excellent history of the internationalist impulse in the United States in the Second World War. And his most recent book, *Howling at the Wind: the Nuclear Post-bum Debate in the United States 1945-1960* (New York, 1978) provided a most thorough examination of the internal and external aspects of the debate on nuclear policy in the United States during six of the eight years of the Eisenhower presidency - a debate which, in its sophisticated admixture of advanced nuclear physics, high politics and deeply held moral convictions, made so much of what passed for political debate over nuclear weapons in Britain at the same time seem jejune and ignorant posturing.

He has now turned his attention to the rehabilitation of President Eisenhower. In the onrush of American political scientists into the New Frontier and the arms of the Kennedy clan, President Eisenhower's reputation has suffered nearly as much as it used to in the hands of the cartoonist Herblock, and the now forgotten humorists of the late 1950s such as Mori Salil. In the Common Rooms of Columbia it was whispered that he had only been elected as Vice-Chancellor because electors confused him with his respected and respectable academic brother, Dr. Milton Eisenhower. Stories were told of him sitting through sessions of the National Security Council following the arguments with the same painful inattention as might be displayed by a pass student in his listening to a meeting of the Wiener Kreis. His ineffectuality of expression when facing the press were collected and retailed in Washington salons and elsewhere as avidly as were his frequent appearances on the golf course. As a result, the Eisenhower of the war years has lost much of his lustre, and the successful organizer of Montgomery, Bradley and Patton has been reduced by some writers to the level of a strategic stumble-bum. If only for this reason, President Eisenhower deserved a serious re-evaluation; the more so as there has been a tendency among the younger and more sensationalist of American historians to transfer their previous animus against President Truman as the (alleged) initiator of the Cold War to Eisenhower as its perpetuator and intensifier.

Divine's method is to divide his subject's policy under the general heading of the Cold War into four major subdivisions: his concept of the Presidency; his role in the (quite separate) Cold War in Asia and in the development of the doctrine of massive retaliation; his role in the Middle East, which includes the Suez crisis of 1956 and the Lebanon-Israel crisis of 1958; and lastly, his search for accommodation with the Soviet Union which was to end so disastrously with the failure of the Paris "summit" in 1960.

It should be said at the start that Divine is no hagiographer seeking, as more illustrious American historians have sought, to rebuild his subject's reputation, in order to derive political advantage for some other cause in the here and now. If his Eisenhower is no stumble-bum, he is no epitome of any code of political morality either. In Divine's view, Eisenhower conceived political ambitions as early as 1943 (when George Patton commented "Ike wants to be President so badly you can taste it"). He took the Presidency of Columbia to escape the awkward military moves which faced America's Chief of Army Staff in 1946-47, when America's military run-down stood in

stark contrast to her increasing global involvement. He eagerly accepted the Chief Command in NATO when it was set up, as the best way of keeping his name before the presidential electorate. He kept in touch throughout this interim period with his potential backers in the Republican party, and won the nomination and the election not by a public draft but by a political fight of great bitterness, showing himself "an adept, and, in times ruthless politician", destroying Senator Taft as a rival only to rehabilitate him as an ally, manipulating Richard Nixon and throwing his mentor General Marshall ruthlessly to the wolves to appease and block out Senator Joe McCarthy.

In this rise to fame his greatest assets were his very considerable skill in diplomacy, his ability to project openness and sincerity, and his instinctive ability at public relations. His concomitant weakness was a longing to be liked which made him evasive where controversy was concerned and resentful of criticism. As a leader in war he commanded men as strongly in personality as Montgomery and Patton, and dealt effectively with Churchill and de Gaulle whilst retaining throughout the ability to inspire and reassure his own fellow countrymen. He radiated serenity. With this build-up, Professor Divine has no difficulty in showing that the hitherto accepted picture of a passive Eisenhower leaving foreign policy to the Savannah-like figure of John

Foster Dulles has very little correspondence with reality. Eisenhower's view of the Presidency as an enhanced Supreme Command in which his Cabinet officers were staff officers and the Chief of Service Staff his army commanders, involved of necessity the delegation of much of the day-to-day activity of foreign relations to his Secretary of State. But in virtually every major issue he overruled or overrode his Secretary of State, toning down his rhetoric and restraining his activism. Dulles was of most use to him not so much as a negotiator with foreigners as a lightning rod to divert the hostility of the real cold warriors of the Congressional Republican Right, and as a target for his Democratic critics. He kept Dulles insecure, confronted at ways with the fact that other foreign policy advisers such as Nelson Rockefeller or Harold Stassen had the entrée to his personal staff.

But when Divine turns to the various episodes which he has chosen as the basis of his rehabilitation of Eisenhower, one is unconsciously reminded of the difference between the point at which he attempted his reassessment of Franklin Roosevelt and the present state of *Eisenhower studies*. When he tackled Roosevelt there was a massive body of literature of all kinds drawing on the resources not only of the Roosevelt Library's massive collections of personal papers but also on the archives of most of the depart-

ments of the US government. There is a similar, perhaps a greater body of evidence, proportionately speaking, bearing on the Eisenhower presidency. Detailed research (of the period is only just beginning; many of the archives of government are still closed. They can be mined upon by use of the American Freedom of Information Act; but it is neither an easy nor a fast process. When British, French and German sources are concerned, it is only now that a more extensive memoir literature is coming into being to support the published recollections of the major statesmen. Nor has Divine used effectively all that is available.

Two examples will have to suffice. Divine rightly makes President Eisenhower rather than John Foster Dulles the architect of the British and French disaster at Suez. Dulles, as he prints out, was ineffectual by the cancer (which later killed him) at the vital moment of the Anglo-French expedition against Suez. At the Anglo-French meeting with Dulles at the end of July, 1956, both governments derived the impression from him that America would not be altogether unhappy or surprised if in the end they felt obliged to overthrow the Egyptian government by force. It was the President who drove Dulles to such turns and twists and evasive manoeuvres to make Eden and the French dismiss him as totally unreliable. What Divine does not add is that it was from Eisenhower himself

that Macmillan, visiting America in September, derived the assurance that America would keep the Soviet Union off Britain's back, and that by implication (otherwise why would there be reassurance he sought or given?) that the President would not stand in the way of Nasser's downfall. Eisenhower's pursuit of the British government, his allegations of Dulles's *betrayal*, Herbert Hoover Junior, in the open humiliation of Selwyn Lloyd in the United Nations, seem peculiarly unforgivable. And Divine's attempts to make the Eisenhower doctrine into anything more than a short course in how not to mangle policy in the Middle East is not a success.

Where Divine is most at fault, however, is in his failure to reconcile the Eisenhower who affected amused tolerance for Churchill's last attempts to secure a "summit" conference in 1953-54, with the Eisenhower whom he sees as working incessantly for a summit conference to end the Cold War with Russia, who believed that if only he could put his convictions directly to the Soviet leadership they would be converted to his (the right) way of thinking. There are nuances and subtleties here of Eisenhower's views of and relations with Britain and British governments, a subject to which Divine doesn't direct his individual attention. All the same this is a fascinating and stimulating little book.

## Preempting the peacemaker

By J. A. Thompson

INGA FLOTO

*Colored House in Paris: A Study of American Policy at the Paris Peace Conference 1919*  
374pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £11.60.  
0 691 04662 X

Rarely does the role of individuals in shaping history seem more impressive than at peace conferences. The decisions made by a few men sitting round a table determine the jurisdictions, and often the conditions, under which whole populations will live their lives, perhaps for generations. Never was this more dramatically evident than in Paris in 1919 when the map of Europe was redrawn by a Council of Ten that was later reduced to a Council of Four. To Keynes, these four individuals became "in the first months of 1919 the microcosm of mankind", and the pen-portraits that he and that other disillusioned mandarin Harold Nicolson sketched of the big three, Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson - "an old man of the world, a *femme fatale*, and a nonconformist

corymbant" - did much to persuade the later-war generation that the chief reason why the Treaty of Versailles departed so far from Wilson's Fourteen Points was simply that the slow-minded, self-righteous American President was "bumboozled" by the wily Europeans.

One of Wilson's principal errors in the eyes of such critics had been to conduct negotiations in person - to allow himself, in Keynes's words, "to be closeted, unsupported, undisciplined, and alone, with men much sharper than himself" - and to neglect his fellow-Commissioners. Of these, the most prominent was undoubtedly his close lieutenant and "dearest friend", "Colonel" Edward M. House, the possessor, according to Nicolson, of "the best diplomatic brain that America has yet produced". House had conducted several diplomatic missions for the President both before and after American entry into the war and had, indeed, negotiated the pre-Armistice agreement with the Allies in October-November, 1918. But during the course of the peace conference itself, his relationship with Wilson - described by Sir Horace Plunkett as "the strangest and most fruitful personal alliance in human history" - perceptibly cooled. It is upon the reasons for this "break" that Profes-

sor Inga Floto, a Danish scholar, has focused her intensive study.

This book was first published in English by the Aarhus University Press in 1973. It did not then receive the attention it merited and its republication as one of the Supplementary Volumes to *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* is to be welcomed, though it is a pity that the opportunity has not been taken to integrate the material in the text, the notes and the appendixes in a clearer and less repetitious way, and to improve the wholly inadequate index. It may be surmised, however, that its reappearance under these auspices owes something to the fact that it constitutes a pretty devastating salvo in a long-running historiographical battle between the partisans of Wilson and the admirers of House. The former, notably Ray Stannard Baker, the President's press secretary in Paris and official biographer, have attributed the break between the two men to Wilson's dissatisfaction on his return from America with his deputy, Charles Seymour, editor of House's *Intimate Papers*, took issue with this interpretation, seeing the decline of the friendship as a less dramatic, more gradual process which largely occurred after Wilson's stroke in September 1919. Others have emphasized the hostility of the second Mrs Wilson to House, and the President's increasing resentment of advice as he obsessively pursued his fight for the League of Nations.

On the basis of the most meticulous examination of the available evidence, Professor Floto concludes that Baker was right in all essentials. Wilson withdrew his trust from the Colonel immediately upon his return to France in mid-March 1919, after learning (not only from House) of the unauthorized concessions that had been made during his absence, particularly over a preliminary peace treaty that made no mention of the League of Nations and over French demands for an independent Rhenish republic. Professor Floto is much concerned with the reasons for House's "disloyalty" and, like other writers on Wilson and House, she is attracted by psychological explanations - in this case, House's desire to be at the centre of events and his susceptibility to flattery, especially from Clemenceau. She points out that House's unauthorized actions (which included the Bullitt Mission to the Soviet government) reflected

no consistent ideological position, and her portrait of his personality is a persuasive one. At the same time, she perhaps underestimates both the burning of Wilson's opposition to the idea of a preliminary peace treaty after his trip to America, and the growing criticism in Paris of the slowness of the peace-making process, which any loyal deputy would have wanted to deflect from the President.

Above all, however, nothing in Professor Floto's account suggests that House's actions had any significant influence on the final terms of the Treaty. On the contrary, by seeing the break so decisive and as coming so early, she absolves House from any responsibility for such concessions as those over reparations and over Shantung for which he has sometimes been blamed. Indeed, it is clear that American policy throughout was made by Wilson, and it is in analysing the reasons for his decisions during the critical phase of the Conference in March and April, 1919, that Professor Floto makes her most interesting and valuable contribution. The Wilson who emerges from these pages is very different from the idealist caricatured by Keynes and Nicolson. Instead, we see an able and ambitious politician, highly conscious of the extent to which his political fortunes were bound up both with establishing a League of Nations into which he could lead the United States, and with maintaining his reputation as a spokesman for liberalism. While Professor Floto agrees with Arno J. Mayer and N. Gordon Levin, Jr. that Wilson was a political realist, she differs from them in seeing him as much less concerned with the Bolshevik threat in Europe than with the Republican threat in America. Professor Floto convincingly links several of Wilson's actions, such as his abandonment of his implied threat to leave the Conference and his public manifesto over Italy's claim to Fiume, to the reports on American opinion he was receiving from his political secretary in Washington, Joseph Tumulty. She emphasizes the way Wilson's opponents at home and abroad reinforced each other and how, far from occupying the omniscient position so extravagantly described by Keynes and Nicolson, he really had little room for manoeuvre. The deliberations in the Council of Four may have been less crucial than they seemed.

## Autumn Notes

Silence . . . It is autumn in the borough . . .  
Rain . . . and only the rain says anything -  
A leaden peace, a wind, and on the wind  
Go liberated leaves hurrying by.  
Open up, my adored one, let me in,  
I've come to you with branches and with dried  
Leaves: in the town, a sad girl has died -  
They took her out and buried her, in the rain . . .  
Let me in, it is autumn in the borough -  
The whole earth has the aspect of a tomb . . .  
Rain . . . and borne by the wind, over the town  
Go liberated leaves hurrying by.

1907

George Bacovia

Translated by Peter Jay

Note: George Bacovia, widely regarded as one of the most important Romanian poets of this century, was born on September 17 1881. He died in 1957.

## POETRY

### Primary experiences

By Tim Dooley

ANDREW HARVEY

*A Fall Circle*  
50pp. Amhe Deutsch. £3.95.  
0 233 97289 7

LEONARD CLARK

*The Way It Was*  
77pp. Enlham Press. £4.50.  
(paperback, £3).  
0 905289 17 X

JOHN SKELTON

*The Collected Shorter Poems 1947-1977*  
335pp. Victoria. British Columbia: Sono Nis Press.  
0 919126 79 0

Even before the publication of his last collection of poems, *Masks & Faces*, in 1978, Andrew Harvey was being widely and justly praised as a poet of unusual gifts. That eclectic and highly cultivated collection revealed a mastery of very varied forms and a considerable emotional and intellectual range. In the years between that and *A Fall Circle*, he has collaborated with the late Anne Pennington on three volumes of translation from Macedonian and Serbo-Croatian folk-literature. His latest collection, which includes "re-creations" of poems from other languages, is deeply influenced by that work.

The result is an almost complete paring down of the exuberance that marked *Masks & Faces*. The new volume consists of an uninterrupted cycle of short poems, mostly untitled, recording the primary experiences (of loneliness and desire, of suffering and bereavement) common to both civilized and primitive communities. Harvey's stated intention is to capture some of the "simplicity, grace and intensity" that he has admired in folk-literature. The means he chooses to employ involve a strictly limited vocabulary, minimal figurative language and a generally arbitrary formal organization. The following complete poem is an extreme, but not untypical example:

See  
Earth  
these heaps  
of pale bones in the wind  
heaps  
higher than mountains  
Earth  
harden me

This kind of writing strikes me as simplistic rather than simple, denatured rather than natural. Primitive literature, like primitive language, is usually intensely complex in its formal organization and derives its simplicity and clarity from recourse to a shared experience of the natural world and of myth. An enterprise such as Harvey's is bound to be problematic since we now lack any common ground of this sort. By yoking together poems which have their sources in such diverse cultures as the Aztec and the Eskimo, the Andalusian and the Christianized Greek, Harvey denies his poems any local habitation. By relying largely on the devices of a print culture for a sense of form, he distances the poems from rhythms of speech or song and effectively replaces the unmyth of experience with its representation, forcing us to read between words rather than letting us hear them. What we are being asked to settle for is, by and large, an airy nothingness: inhabited by ghosts of poems, disembodied voices.

Occasionally, however, the strengths of his originals and Harvey's own undeniable talent combine to surpass the limitations of the exercise and produce writing of eloquence and force. This is particularly true of the poems which draw on Mediterranean culture, where one senses Harvey is more naturally at home. The version of a medieval Greek poem on death achieves some of the same lyrical intensity as his

"Songs of Odias Irida" in *Masks & Faces*, and his version of a poem by St John of the Cross at least bears comparison with the one made of poems of the same era in Geoffrey Hill's "The Parthenon Cattle".

Young shepherd in a dark country  
Love had him wounded and lonely

Young shepherd in a dark country  
where he was beaten  
left to the  
Love had him wounded and lonely.

"She has left me to the alone,  
and will not remember my name"

He mounted a high tree  
Love spread his arms wide

Love held him there until he died.

The pathlessness and diversity  
which make an entirely sympathetic  
reading of *A Fall Circle* difficult are  
about him Leonard Clark's *The Way It Was*, Clark's dominant subject is the "blue remembered hills" of an idealized rural England. "The shadows, the meadows, the lanes, the gullies, the curved choirs" that Larkin pictures going under the antiseptic hammer are something still accessible to Clark. He creates a world in which the experience of the seasons is still left as primary. "With April but a name for diffidit", "Easter"; where the church with its bell-towers and well-tended graves is the pivot of a community, not merely a derivative adjunct. The mysteries of birth and death seem more approachable within such a pattern and Clark is able to write of them with clarity and conviction.

A brief glance at the first-line index to John Skelton's *Collected Shorter Poems* produces the interesting statistical information that more than a tenth of the poems commence with the pronoun "I". It is not surprising, therefore, that both the strengths and weaknesses of Skelton's writing appear to derive from a characteristic self-concern. Some of the most successful of these poems were reprinted or first published in the early 1960s, the period just following the publication of Lowell's *Life Studies* and Spalding's *Heart's Needle*. While Skelton's writing can

There can, however, be something too self-centred about Clark's certainties. The recurrent identifications between re-creation and the pattern of the seasons, the too ready assurance that the names on obscure graves "live on", can come to sound a little pat. It is perhaps for this reason that a poem like "Cider-house", which allows into Clark's idyll some sense of the forces that threaten it, remained for me the most impressive in the collection:

New tenants came with silos,  
doubled the cows in the valley  
meadows,  
ten score of sheep balanced on the  
hills:  
left the under-house empty.  
Mice smile now through subways and  
mouseholes  
where once the fair engine purred  
October mornings away,  
the air half-dropped with sweet  
limes,  
the cider mused, the press shrouded  
and dived.

A brief glance at the first-line index to John Skelton's *Collected Shorter Poems* produces the interesting statistical information that more than a tenth of the poems commence with the pronoun "I". It is not surprising, therefore, that both the strengths and weaknesses of Skelton's writing appear to derive from a characteristic self-concern. Some of the most successful of these poems were reprinted or first published in the early 1960s, the period just following the publication of Lowell's *Life Studies* and Spalding's *Heart's Needle*. While Skelton's writing can

remind one of the tender self-examination of those two books, he was not as successful as the two Americans in making memorable poetry out of the current conflicts of his personal life.

His gifts are more positively demonstrated instead in those poems which make use of involuntary memory, where his talent for the particular evocation of visual and tactile sensations is clear, as may be seen in the following description of a garden shed in "As I Remember It":

A finger nail pressed home into the wood  
faint wet with autumn could scoop  
yellow cheese  
that squashed like pith of cider in the  
lamb;  
wood-shavings, phib-pine usually, lay  
around,  
the top layer fresh and crispy, jointly  
the same shoulders,  
the same neck:  
I stare out from  
his photograph

Memories also allow him to treat wider, more public themes with conviction. This is seen in "Big Field", where a schoolboy's sports field and changing room humiliations are set against France's victory in Spain and the fall of France, or "Viet Nam" which draws on Skelton's memories of the Blitz to enhance its rhetorical effects. "Memory should instruct", Skelton comments in "At Wulden Pond", but also demonstrates how it can disturb the equilibrium of the present with its unasked-for visions of guilt or terror.

Skelton's finest poems explore the eerie coexistence in the imagination of different periods of time. The

analogue he makes between the personal and the historical are outstanding but sometimes surprising, as in his poem on the death of Theodore Roethke, "Gilt Shirts". When Skelton links Roethke's posthumous gift to him of shirts with the Indian leader Woroka who inaugurated the 150th Dance War which brought about the massacre at Wounded Knee, the two ideas are not merely juxtaposed. They interpenetrate, creating a composite celebration of the way in which imagination can go beyond the limits of mortality.

Imagination  
evokes deaths  
They sang through butters,  
boys in rain  
catching the wet in their  
mouths, licking  
then bare arms.  
The shirt fits,  
the same shoulders,  
the same neck:  
I stare out from  
his photograph

The weakness that derives from Skelton's self-absorption emerges most obviously in his many poems on sexual love. These lack any of the subtlety of the poems which draw on memory. Skelton's account of the adventures of what one poem refers to as his "poor, dumb/swollen-headed thing" is explicit and tedious, by default. The timesequence member is so busy that one begins to wonder where its owner found the time to produce the fifteen books of poetry and forty-one other titles the blurb credits him with completing since moving to Canada in 1963.

## Living in the world

By William Scammell

LOUIS SIMPSON

*A Company of Poets*  
385pp. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. \$5.95.  
0 472 06326 X

PHILIP LEVINE

*Don't Ask*  
177pp. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.  
0 472 06327 8

RICHARD KOSTELANETZ

*The Old Poetries and the New*  
326pp. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. \$6.95.  
0 472 06319 7

"When people worry about the state of poetry in Britain, especially in comparison with the States, I think that what they are worried about is literary movement and excitement. Good poets are nice to have, but movements are more fun, and these days the Americans seem to be having all the fun." Thus Louis Simpson in 1971, in a wise and witty essay called "Advice to the English".

A *Company of Poets* brings together a wide variety of Simpson's autobiographical pieces and talks, reviews of contemporary poetry, and interviews. It contains a great many good things, especially in the reviews section. Here he is on Allen Ginsberg, for example: "He was perfectly capable of writing advertising copy and paying his analysts, but the voice of William Blake kept breaking in." Of the same writer, *Journal*, he observes "... dreams do not make good reading - no wonder psychologists are paid large fees for listening to them!" But he is too good a critic to settle for the settling of scores. Admitting that he was one of the people who did not pay sufficient attention to Ginsberg's poems when they first came out he says "I am happy to have this opportunity to say I was wrong - not merely wrong, obtuse. I still don't care for 'Howl'. Lucien Carr and Neal Cassidy were not my idea of 'the best minds in America' - but other poems in the volume are superb, and 'Kaddish' is a masterpiece. Anything the author has written since deserves to be read."

That sort of generosity permeates

the book, together with an astringent wit. On some aspects of Pound: "This is the typewriter trying to do the work of the imagination." On slowly verse: "Without an involvement in technique, the practice of any art must degenerate into a desperate exertion of mere personality." On Robert Duncan: "Duncan reminds me of the French Revolution: he is both the best of times and the worst of times. I know that it is useless to wish that a poet of this kind would try to be clearer, for his poems are the result of his confusions. Nevertheless, it is a fact that William Blake, by persisting in his follies, did not become wise; he merely became tedious." On Gary Snyder: "This may be the peace of the Orient, but I doubt it. I think it is just monotony."

The Interview With a Famous Writer is a dubious genre - quiddity, someone must hop, emerging from the *quid pro quo* of prompter and vaudeville mouthpiece, but Simpson's interview with his various confidants, of his recent work, which reaches, in very American fashion, after a new honesty and simplicity, he says

Writers have all sorts of idiosyncrasies, but what counts is the created work. I believe that my attachment to the surface of things will create in the reader a greater affection for life. In American writing we have had a number of weird creations: a woman who wears a scarlet letter, a white whale, a hero who cannot make love, and so on. But it seems to me that we are short of people who love their lives. Do you know the saying by Goethe? "Prophecy to the right, prophets to the left." The child of the world in the middle. Well, I'm a child of the world. I want to write poetry for people who live in the world.

It is a heartwarming book, confirming one's intuition that the man - it is not always so - is as fine as the poems.

Philip Levine's *Don't Ask* consists entirely of interviews with the poet, eight of them in all, one conducted by Studs Terkel. To read more than one of them at a time is to risk growing irritated and bored, such is the nature of the form. It's a danger Philip Levine is well aware of: "Of what possible use or interest is this book?", he asks in his Preface.

... With Keats, I believe that the poet is the least poetical of beings. . . . Frankly, I would prefer you read my poetry. I think it is a far clearer record of what I believed on those days during which I was most myself. Amen to that. Taken slowly and intermittently, however, this book sheds light on a good and interesting man.

Like Tony Harrison in Britain (and, to some extent, Douglas Dunn), Levine sets out from overtly socialist and working-class premises. Interviewer: *They are the non-celebrated, and in a sense you are celebrating the non-celebrated.*

Levine: That's right. That's my dearest hope - that I give them names. . . . *The Names of the Last*, when I titled my book that, I'm trying to give them their names back . . .

And: . . . just the writing of a poem is a political act. I don't think there is anything more clear than the fact that our politicians are murdering the language. At this point, interviewer and subject go into a duet of condemnation:

So if you write about a beautiful lake . . .  
Yes . . .  
... by the very nature of its being polluted . . .  
... yes . . .  
... by industrial waste or military waste . . .  
That's right . . .  
... it's political.  
That's right.

Throughout the book Levine names names ("Bly is a poet who has become incredibly boring. I don't think he was very talented to begin with, but he was able to describe snow covered with bird shit very well. But then he became a seer, as did Gary Snyder. They became very wise men . . . and like all wise men they are extraordinarily boring"), armours himself in demotic ("Hayden Carruth digs my poetry") and ironic cadences ("Can I get back to the woman's thing?" "I'd guess nothing could stop you!"), quotes Keats, who is evidently his hero, and talks horse sense, as a poet should ("Do you know Alun Lewis?" "No." "Go stand in the corner." Edward Thomas? Thomas Nash? "No." "I'll break your pencils. . .").

Richard Kostelanetz, whose effusions are about as bad as a book on

modern poetry could be, belongs to the flabby underbelly of cultural journalism, or the Higher Chit. In his preface he laments for commissions: "May I ask publishers and fundations to make that four more books appear to the behind these essays. . . . In the essays themselves banality plays host to irrelevance and the resulting exchanges are stupefying."

Six feet tall, slender in build, Ashbery has a smartly barked, graying brown hair, soft blue eyes, an incipiently ruddy complexion, and a luxurious, dark gray, half-moon mustache around the top of his mouth. His handsome face is ruffled by a long, beakish nose. Except for his new glasses, he has looked roughly the same over the dozen years I have known him. His talk reveals a flat, nasal, western New York accent, and his easy, infectious laughter, far wide spaces between his front teeth. One afternoon this spring, when we met at Brooklyn College, he wore a dark blue tennis shirt, light blue jeans, black light-up shoes and a denim jacket.

Oh, and "the real key to Ashbery's genius lies, in my opinion, in the 'sound' of his poetry. . . . Jonathan Cull told me, . . . 'There is a breathing quality'."

All this and more from someone who has, "thankfully", been published and anthologized around the world. "Some readers might like these essays better than my poetry, or vice versa. . . . One does Literature's work in different ways. . . ."

The useful series from which these three books come, *Poets on Poetry*, would be more useful still with the addition of bibliographies and indexes.

A NEW DELUXE  
FACSIMILE OF  
Shakespeare's  
FIRST FOLIO

100 numbered copies, leather bound, blocked spine, slip case.  
Price £175 (no discount).

GREEN RIVERS PRESS  
5 Park View, Sheppards Magna,  
Nr. Atherton, Warrwick.



## Vital fragments

By Michael Mason

### MARTIN BUTLIN:

*The Paintings and Drawings of William Blake*  
Volume One: Plates, pp 193  
Volume Two: Text, pp 668  
Yale University Press, £100 per set.  
£25 after 31.12.81.  
0 300 02550 5

With this new Blake compilation there draws nearer a remarkable event. Unless certain recent books become unexpectedly hard to obtain there will soon be available in the bookshops, at one time, a listing and detailed description of all Blake's visual work, every jot of it - and reproductions of most of it. The main contribution still being awaited is the third volume of Roger Enson and Robert Essick's *William Blake Book Illustrations*, which will deal with Blake's commercial book illustration after 1796. This degree of coverage must be extremely rare, if not unique. Of course it is hard to think of similar artists, to make the comparison. But surely no painter-illustrator, at least in England, has ever been the subject of so much simultaneous, detailed description and reproduction.

Being thorough about Blake has a

long history. The handful of books on the visual art which will soon compose such a complete survey are the equivalent, though naturally a much more extensive one, of the Keynes edition of the writings, first published in 1957. Many reasons for the urge to completeness, to scooping up all the bits, may be suggested. To start with, Blake's surviving output is to some extent a matter of fragments anyway: because he was isolated and thwarted. Then there is the special vitality, or pressure, in his work: so that a marginal comment, a couple of lines of verse, a sketch of a head, a new version of a plate, can be an unexpectedly fresh, self-sufficient experience. And there is always the possibility of a really important project turning up, or at least the traces of it.

This is no doubt remote, but we know very little about Blake's plans at all sorts of points. What kind of enterprise were the "Books of Designs" (which are known only through reconstruction), and how many were there? Butlin reproduces the sketch for a titlepage, the lettering now deciphered by Erdman to read "The American War". This is probably a first thought for "America", but what should be made of the verso of item 444 in Butlin's catalogue: another sketch for a titlepage, this time inscribed "Visions of Eternity"?

There are also, however, reasons

to doubt the value of the complete work of an artist's output as a whole. Blake had a narrow repertoire of visual motifs and treatments, and this restricts the degree of interest a new or unfamiliar picture (even something as elaborate and unforeseen as the Arlington Court painting) is ever going to possess, in comparison with an equivalent piece of text. Suppose, for example, that Blake's annotated copy of Locke, or Burke on the Sublime and the Beautiful, turned up (on these "I wrote my opinions," he claimed). Blake's text includes satire, rhapsody, heroic narrative, epigram, dream writing, and several other kinds, but there isn't a comparable range in the visual work. The big, overarching uniformity in the pictures is Blake's concentration on human subjects. Among the hundreds of images in Butlin's catalogue there is, apart from some preliminary work, only a tiny group that does not include the human figure: the landscapes done at Felpham (and at Felpham, for Blake, "celestial landscapes" were "distinctly seen" anyway).

Another relevant peculiarity about Blake as an artist is that the pictures do not interconnect to the extent which their similarity of appearance might promise, and which would furnish one of the usual justifications for this kind of art-historical thoroughness. There is missing the effect

of hierarchy which commonly emerges when an artist's output is comprehensively inspected: of different stages of work leading into one another. The fascinating gap here involves the illuminated poems. Preliminary work for these plates is extraordinarily rare, and even then attended by uncertainties. As a result, we simply do not know how Blake went about creating the illuminated books. There are quite a number of untraced and "possible" studies, but only fourteen known and these are generally very sketchy. There is only one known squared drawing, for Plate 6 of *Jerusalem*.

This and other features of Blake's working habits, enforced or voluntary, have been an assistance to art historians in carving up his visual output, in devising a logic for the various compilations which now exist. In particular there is a tidy relationship between Butlin's new catalogue and David Bindman's *The Complete Graphic Works of William Blake*. Butlin's two volumes cover all Blake's drawings and paintings, and those printed pictures (whether from an engraved or flat surface) which were issued on their own, or out of their original context. In one of his books, David Bindman has dealt with all the printed works. Apart from the illustrations to *Job*, to Blair's *The Grave*, and for the Thornton Virgil, there is no major

case of subjects being duplicated in the two studies because Blake executed them in two mediums (the Dante illustrations would presumably have been a fourth instance if Blake had lived). The plates in the putative large colour prints, are the leading cases where the medium does not unequivocally make a group of works a Bindman candidate rather than a Butlin one, and they are the only two groups covered by both books. (Moreover, Blake didn't like issuing the Designs without the text of the poems they came from, and only did it at all commonly for one work: *Urizen*.)

So this new catalogue makes a great deal of sense, more sense than its materials might have been expected to permit. To have reservations about the complete, simultaneous presentation of Blake's art is not to impugn the quality or interest of individual projects such as this. Butlin's catalogue is a magnificent piece of scholarship, admirably set out and illustrated, and not afraid to chance its arm on matters of interpretation. Butlin seems, in fact, to be a Blake enthusiast first and a Blake scholar second (though no less a profound one). For the discipline that has made this Catalogue possible, he thanks Professor Anthony Blunt. This adds an honourable note to a superb book.

Clydon House, Buckinghamshire, and ended his days sadly as a victualler in Denmark Hill. The creative artists are there, too, of course: Artari and Bagutti, Bernasconi and Fraochini, Verrio and Laguerre, Thornhill and Rose. But so are the craftsmen - entrepreneurs, immortalized by patent: J. A. Richter with his multifaceted scagliola; Joseph Bramah with his fishing inventions and unpeckable locks; William Croghan and Eleanor Coade, famous for their manufacture of artificial stone.

Geoffrey Beard is a born accumulator. His *Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England, 1660-1820* will take its place alongside Edward Croft-Murray's *Decorative Painting in England, 1537-1837* (two volumes, 1962, 1970), Rupert Gunnis's *Dictionary of British Sculptors, 1660-1851* (1953) and H. M. Colvin's *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840* (1978) as an indispensable index of England's Georgian heritage.

When, in *King Lear*, Goneril's husband defects to the side of Good, Goneril exclaims: "An interlude! She means that Albany's behaviour is ridiculous, no more to be taken seriously than a pompous and old-fashioned play. The term interlude does have an unfortunate suggestion of insignificance about it: a mere pause between matter more worthy of attention (one explanation of its etymology is that it was originally a play performed between courses at dinner). This may be partly responsible for its neglect: 'play', with which it is in fact virtually synonymous, is a far more attractive term. And until very recently it was quite difficult even for an assiduous academic to find out very much about Tudor Drama, for the texts of almost all the plays were out of print and some had never been edited or reprinted since their appearance in Tudor times. Over a hundred interludes were printed in the sixteenth century, but where were they?

Now, all of a sudden, Tudor Drama is having a renaissance. It is difficult to know whether to ascribe this flowering to a sudden taste for intellectual allegory among twentieth-century scholars, or to a preference among theatre people for economical, flexible plays. Texts are being edited (in the Revels Plays and in D. S. Brewer's *Tudor Interludes* series). This is not just a matter of the general expansion of the academic industry - the plays are being revived in the theatre by both amateurs and professionals. Back in 1950 Kenneth Tynan observed that in the scene between Fanny and Folly in Skelton's *Magnificence* was "some of the most professional comic writing before Shakespeare, and funnier than much in him. No one took any notice then, but recent productions of the play at the Shaw Theatre in London, in Toronto and in Brighton

have proved him right. Tudor Drama is not drab at all, but vigorous and brightly coloured.

It is unfortunate, then, that Volume 2 of *The Revels History of Drama in England* is put together in a manner that could serve to perpetuate the old disparagement. One glance at the blurbs is enough to make one depressed. We are told that this volume "surveys the period from 1500-1576, which saw the transition from the medieval religious drama to the secular drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries". "Transitional" is hardly more inviting to the eye than "drab", and if the preface is not calculated to make one look forward to reading about the plays, it also tells us nothing of what was actually produced between 1500 and 1576 and is not really accurate. Recent work on city records has shown that "the heyday of the miracle cycles" was, at least in some cases, actually the sixteenth century: in Chester the cycle was flourishing in 1575, while people are found of pointing out that Shakespeare could have seen the Coventry plays. Moral plays, on the other hand, were still being performed when Shakespeare's plays were staged. There seems really to have been no transitional period. It is a pity that a new reference book should take such little note of recent research, or of the productions mentioned briefly in its cover.

Glynne Wickham writes in a much more stimulating way in his *Phys and their Makers to 1576*, Volume 3 of *Early English Stages*. He sees the Tudor period as of great importance in the development of English drama, and makes constant comparisons and cross-references from medieval and Tudor drama to the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. He also puts *Gammer Gurton's Needle* and *Gorboduc* firmly in their place.

In England... comedy and tragedy, as distinct genres, developed alongside of and out of religious tragedy-comedy: they were thus supplements to rather than the basic or natural forms of medieval and Renaissance dramatic structure. Ever since English was first established as a university discipline it has been normal for teachers to inform their pupils that comedy arrived in England in the 1550s with *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. And that tragedy followed a decade later with *Gorboduc*. Yet... enough evidence has emerged by now to make it seem

## DRAMA

NORMAN SANDERS, RICHARD SOUTHERN, T. W. CRAIK and LOIS POTTER:

*The Revels History of Drama in England*  
Volume II 1500-1576  
290pp. Methuen, £22.75.  
0 416 13030 5

GLYNNE WICKHAM:  
*Early English Stages: 1300 to 1600*  
Volume Three: Plays and their Makers to 1576  
357pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £14.50.  
0 7100 0218 1

Sir Philip Sidney was scathing about Tudor Drama in his *Defence of Poesy*, saying that the plays were "neither right tragedies, nor right comedies, mingling kings and clowns". Partly as a result of his depreciation of them, Tudor plays have never been popular. Indeed, when in 1944 C. S. Lewis gave the Clark lectures that were the basis of his book *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (excluding Drama) (1954), he didn't deem Tudor drama worthy even of so much notice as the poetry of the period, which was at least included, though under the dubious title of "Drab Age Verse".

Whatever the reason for Lewis's disregard of Tudor drama, it affected university syllabuses in the 1950s and 60s. There might be a token glance at the Tudor period in a course on "Pre-Shakespearean Drama", in which, sandwiched between the Wakefield "Second Shepherd's Play" and *The Spanish Tragedy*, would lie *Gammer Gurton's Needle* and *Gorboduc*. "The first English comedy" and "the first English tragedy". Yet despite their equally striking titles (*Enough is as Good as a Feast*, *The Lingerer thou Livest*, the more *Fool thou art, Like will to Like*, *quoth the Devil to the Collier*) the moral interludes would not get a mention. They have not been thought to play any part in the development of English drama; they have been considered a peculiarly Tudor aberration (something to do with the Reformation?) that had no relation to, or effect on, anything that followed.

When, in *King Lear*, Goneril's husband defects to the side of Good, Goneril exclaims: "An interlude! She means that Albany's behaviour is ridiculous, no more to be taken seriously than a pompous and old-fashioned play. The term interlude does have an unfortunate suggestion of insignificance about it: a mere pause between matter more worthy of attention (one explanation of its etymology is that it was originally a play performed between courses at dinner). This may be partly responsible for its neglect: 'play', with which it is in fact virtually synonymous, is a far more attractive term. And until very recently it was quite difficult even for an assiduous academic to find out very much about Tudor Drama, for the texts of almost all the plays were out of print and some had never been edited or reprinted since their appearance in Tudor times. Over a hundred interludes were printed in the sixteenth century, but where were they?

Now, all of a sudden, Tudor Drama is having a renaissance. It is difficult to know whether to ascribe this flowering to a sudden taste for intellectual allegory among twentieth-century scholars, or to a preference among theatre people for economical, flexible plays. Texts are being edited (in the Revels Plays and in D. S. Brewer's *Tudor Interludes* series). This is not just a matter of the general expansion of the academic industry - the plays are being revived in the theatre by both amateurs and professionals. Back in 1950 Kenneth Tynan observed that in the scene between Fanny and Folly in Skelton's *Magnificence* was "some of the most professional comic writing before Shakespeare, and funnier than much in him. No one took any notice then, but recent productions of the play at the Shaw Theatre in London, in Toronto and in Brighton

have proved him right. Tudor Drama is not drab at all, but vigorous and brightly coloured.

It is unfortunate, then, that Volume 2 of *The Revels History of Drama in England* is put together in a manner that could serve to perpetuate the old disparagement. One glance at the blurbs is enough to make one depressed. We are told that this volume "surveys the period from 1500-1576, which saw the transition from the medieval religious drama to the secular drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries". "Transitional" is hardly more inviting to the eye than "drab", and if the preface is not calculated to make one look forward to reading about the plays, it also tells us nothing of what was actually produced between 1500 and 1576 and is not really accurate. Recent work on city records has shown that "the heyday of the miracle cycles" was, at least in some cases, actually the sixteenth century: in Chester the cycle was flourishing in 1575, while people are found of pointing out that Shakespeare could have seen the Coventry plays. Moral plays, on the other hand, were still being performed when Shakespeare's plays were staged. There seems really to have been no transitional period. It is a pity that a new reference book should take such little note of recent research, or of the productions mentioned briefly in its cover.

Glynne Wickham writes in a much more stimulating way in his *Phys and their Makers to 1576*, Volume 3 of *Early English Stages*. He sees the Tudor period as of great importance in the development of English drama, and makes constant comparisons and cross-references from medieval and Tudor drama to the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. He also puts *Gammer Gurton's Needle* and *Gorboduc* firmly in their place.

In England... comedy and tragedy, as distinct genres, developed alongside of and out of religious tragedy-comedy: they were thus supplements to rather than the basic or natural forms of medieval and Renaissance dramatic structure. Ever since English was first established as a university discipline it has been normal for teachers to inform their pupils that comedy arrived in England in the 1550s with *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. And that tragedy followed a decade later with *Gorboduc*. Yet... enough evidence has emerged by now to make it seem

proble to scholars today that the Reformation played a far more important role in giving English drama of the Elizabethan and Jacobean era its distinctive shape and quality than did the examples of classical antiquity and Renaissance Italy... [Early English religious] drama inevitably drew its structure from doctrine; and granted a doctrine of redemption obtainable through repentance, this drama was, inescapably, tragicomic. And later comedy and tragedy must thus be regarded as grafts upon this native root-stock, imposed somewhat awkwardly, by a relatively small but very articulate and influential group of bookmen.

The native English form is tragicomic: thus Sidney is answered.

The Tudor plays were not right tragedies or comedies, because they were not supposed to be.

Nor did they mean to conform to the unities [another of Sidney's complaints was that they didn't], though they sometimes did so in fact. (*Gammer Gurton's Needle* parodies classical convention, for example by having all terrifying events, such as the choking of Gib the cat, and the breaking of Rat Rat's head, take place "behind the door", offstage.) Often they covered many places and vast tracts of time conveniently and economically through allegory. They were also economical in their staging. Interludes are particularly easy plays to produce, because they require few actors (most of them are arranged for doubling, and can be put on by a company of four to six), no scenery and only the minimum of props: "most convenient", as one play says, "for such as be disposed, either to sleep this comedy in private houses, or otherwise".

The combination of allegorical mode and economical method produced their common and most typical characteristic, the use of "device", or symbol. The allegory was originally there to convey some moral message (another aspect of interludes that has helped to make them unpopular), but Tudor playwrights were more interested in the means of the medium than the message: in how they could most effectively and economically combine thought, word and deed. This was frequently done by the use of a "device": something like a dramatic concrete poem, where words, visual elements and actions all combine to produce a unique image that is more than the sum of its parts.

In the substantial central section of

all the images considered in Wickham's chapter on "Device and Visual Figure" are of great interest. Some of them - combat, for example - might be basic elements of any drama, except that in Tudor interludes they relate to and combine with themes and arguments on the verbal level. The storming of the Castle of Perseverance is both an exciting tournament or *pas d'armes* and a metaphor of the human soul attacked by the World, the Flesh and the Devil. In the section on "disfigurement of faces", Lucifer's fall is put beside the face of Wit blackened by Ignorance in *Wit and Science* as

Wickham observes "this sensational and sardonic exemplum could be dramatized just as it stands". It would not really be that easy (the stage-effects would be very expensive), though if the stage-manager of *The Castle of Perseverance* could make gunpowder burn in the devil's hands, ears and arse, presumably molten metal could be made to run from this unfortunate man's nose, eyes and ears. But the point is that the author of *Jacob's Well* is using true verbal techniques. He creates a visual effect for his audience through his words, rather as is done in a radio play. The interludes use actions as well as words; the words do not have to do all the work on their own. (This is not as obvious as it sounds, for it is not always easy to visualize the action: the plays have far fewer stage-directions than is usual in later plays.) While some of the devices discussed in this chapter, such as word-play and jokes, are primarily verbal, others, such as "Songs and Atmospheres" have very little to do with language used dramatically.

This is a pity, for language does have an especially important role in moral plays, since it can sometimes symbolize or stand for action. Wickham implies as much in his section on "Disputation" which relates university training in rhetoric to play-writing. He is not happy with this device: "Disputation... possesses the awkward corollary of suggesting further questions... which... float provocatively around the play to tease and worry us long after the performance is over". This in fact was precisely the intention of writers like John Heywood (at least so Joel Altman suggests in *The Tudor Play of Mind*): "loose ends", as Wickham calls them, were part of the game, or play. Language itself is part of the game, and there are other devices than word-play, that might have been mentioned, such as repetition and stylistic variation. The constant hammering home of the idea of "hell" in the dialogues between Mephistopheles and Faustus is part of the device which the hell-mouth in the final scene also represents. The contrasting verbal styles of Vice and Virtue in many of the plays are one

## In the Dark

My cigarette glows, and your boom snap to the dark. Not another tortuous scene... Like the men in the trenches, I don't smoke, in order not to give myself away to the enemy. - But the tobacco is mixed with self-petre, to keep it burning... I curse them quietly, the narrow little cackles of flame in my lap.

It doesn't make sense. You know where I am - on the chair, carefully holding an ashtray in my other hand, and listening to you... After our third argument in your parked car, we are relaxing from the ordeal of each other; unwinding, in our different ways. - And you, you're double-jointed and subject to back-ache.

I am familiar with your callisthenics, and the order in which you perform them - a series of stretches and Yoga positions. I was told the fluid expands in the cartilages and turns to gas. Anyway, it restores you. On good nights, I rub my hands together and take away the static from your eyes.

Not tonight, of course... But even so, I bear you addressing, in this small room most of your things land on my feet, and you get into bed. We weren't talking any more, but then you ask me to come to bed as well, and, thinking what a blessing it is to be allowed to forget our differences like this, I comply.

Michael Hofmann

## Georgians at work

By J. Mordaunt Crook

### GEOFFREY BEARD:

*Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England, 1660-1820*  
311pp. Edinburgh: John Bartholomew, £30.  
0 7028 8430 8

When the formidable Margaret Jourdain died in 1951, the study of eighteenth-century decorative art was still in its adolescence. True, she had published an impressive list of volumes on the subject of Georgian crafts and craftsmanship. But these were primarily concerned with style and technique: they lacked archival basis which transforms connoisseurship into scholarship. A year after her death, Geoffrey Beard first began research. He set out to break down a barrier which Jourdain's generation had presumed insuperable: the anonymity of the Georgian craftsman.

Jourdain's *English Decorative Plasterwork of the Renaissance* (1926) had in fact listed the names of some two score plasterers, mostly derived from printed sources. When the *Times Literary Supplement* reviewed this pioneering volume on March 3, 1927, its anonymous critic shrugged off all questions relating to identification, and concentrated instead on matters of style. He seems indeed to have felt obliged to justify even the choice of subject in terms of current architectural theory: "The 'antiquarian' and 'decorative' culture of the material itself, its 'freedom', from structural obligations and technical reservations; its 'unique responsiveness to changes in style'... all these factors apparently helped to 'redeem Renaissance plasterwork from the artistic inferiority which a sensitive person cannot but feel in Renaissance wood or stone carving'." The inferiority of a design imposed upon it instead of proceeding from the nature of the materials.

Nearly half a century later, the emphasis has certainly changed. Beard's approach is resolutely factual. For twenty years he has delved in city libraries and county record offices; he has rifled many an eighteenth-century bank account; he has ransacked parish records and county house monuments. Every so often he has surfaced

with interim reports of his findings: *Georgian Craftsmen and their Work* (1966); *Decorative Plasterwork in Great Britain* (1975). And now he presents what must surely be his final contribution as the lexicographer of decorative art: *Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England, 1660-1820*.

This volume is divided into three sections. The first deals with patronage, training, materials and technique: the logistics and technology of Georgian design. The second comprises a series of descriptive vignettes: commissions chosen to illustrate particular aspects of the subject. The third section is really the meat of the book: a biographical dictionary of craftsmen. Where Jourdain had forty plasterers, Beard has 340 - plus another 375 joiners, carpenters, locksmiths, painters and glaziers. 715 craftsmen in all, and as many as 6,000 commissions. Finally there is a useful bibliography and glossary, plus three indexes of persons, places and subjects. Through-

out, style is largely discounted. "This", Dr Beard explains, "is not a history of stylistic change". Its illustrations, however - 145 in black and white, sixteen in colour - do go some way to make up for the lack of stylistic analysis. By combining photography and documented captions, Beard supplies in fact a valuable anthology of visual evidence. His selection may seem random, his conclusions limited. There is more than a hint of bookmaking about the presentation. And the fragmented nature of the text hardly makes for easy reading. But this isn't really a book to read: scholars will plunder the references, and laymen will simply gaze at the photos.

Still, for anyone who cares to look closely, Beard's book is a veritable gold-mine. Here is the strange staircase - floating rather than flying - at Count Hall, Shropshire (c 1800), with timbering which seem almost to defy the laws of gravity. Here is the so-called "Grecian theatrical staircase" at the

Vyne, Hampshire (c 1765), ingeniously multiplying space. And here is the lacy Gothic plasterwork of the Saloon at Arbury, Warwickshire (c 1786), clinging to - rather than supporting - the flimsiest of ceilings. Gliming Gibbons's marvellous carvings at Petworth, Cambridge, Burlington, Badminton, Bolton and St Paul's; Vanbrugh's rumbustious Baroque; Wyatt's etiolated Neo-Classicism; William Kent's glorious State Barge, designed in 1732 for Frederick, Prince of Wales, bulging with shells and writhing with gilded dolphins - each illustration has its caption, documenting the circumstances of design and construction. Those anonymous craftsmen live again: John Sheppard, plasterer to Lord Chandos, "drunk from morning to night"; Stephen Colledge, "the Protestant joiner", hanged at Oxford in 1681; Henry Clay, who died in 1778 worth £80,000, "made entirely out of his papier-mâché enterprise"; Luke Lightfoot, the temperamental genius who created the Rococo glories of

## Ornamentation of old

By Robin Middleton

*Fragments from Greek and Roman Architecture*  
The Classical American Edition of Hector d'Espouy's Plates  
127pp. W. W. Norton, \$19.95.  
0 393 01427 4

This is a lazy book: the text consists of three pages of notes on Hector d'Espouy's plates by John Blatteau, slightly less than three pages on d'Espouy's life by Christiane Sears, a page and a half from d'Espouy's own preface, translated by Henry Hope Reed, followed by a selection of 127 of the 200 plates which make up the two marvellous volumes of d'Espouy's *Fragments d'architecture antique d'après les reliefs et restes de monuments persépolis, grecs et romains de la France à Rome*, issued first from 1896 to 1905. Hector d'Espouy, though he spent most of his life painting murals, was trained as an architect at the École des Beaux-Arts, and had himself won the Grand Prix in 1884, and was thus well placed to make a selection of the best restoration studies produced

by the students of that school in the nineteenth century. His proselytes have less to offer, nothing to add.

Mr Blatteau says very little more than d'Espouy in his introduction. Christiane Sears adds little more by way of biographical information than is available in the dictionaries of French biography, though it is fair to add that she is notably more precise, finally locating d'Espouy's decorative schemes, whether in Paris for Boul de Castellane, or in New York for James A. Burden, dating his publications (partially) and noting the date of his death correctly. The source of this new information would seem to be family papers, but no references are given. Henry Hope Reed has truncated d'Espouy's Introduction, which was no more than two pages anyway, in particular leaving out the expression of thanks to Chauvat, who engraved some of the plates. When one turns to the reproductions of these it is easy enough to see why. The quality of the sepia originals has been quite lost in the grey tone plates offered here. d'Espouy's original notes on the plates are omitted, instead two or three line captions are provided for most of the illustrations, though not for all. The sequ-

ence of the plates, though it follows that of the original two volumes, now seems arbitrary and haphazard. The compilation offered here - not unlike the 1923 Pencil Points selection - is neither scholarly nor considered, nor is it seductive. What one is bound to ask, was the point of it?

The answer, quite simply, is that it is yet another exercise in propaganda, put out by Classical America, a society founded after the Second World War by Henry Hope Reed to promote a revival of classical architecture in the United States. The most notable architect of the group is John Harrington Bayley, known, if at all, for his extension of the Prickleton in New York. The designs for which he is responsible and the literary propaganda that has emanated from the society, in particular Mr Reed's *The Golden City* (published first in 1959) and the *Journal of Classical America* (which reached issue number IV in 1977), are not persuasive of their aims. Mr Reed is certainly well informed on the history of the classical tradition and not at all unperceptive: the current distaste for the banalities of modern architecture and the wilder frolics of such practitioners as Robert Venturi have, moreover, imparted a modish-

ness to his outpourings, but that is all.

Reading Mr Blatteau's Introduction to the selection of d'Espouy plates, it soon becomes clear that there is little real understanding among these, enthusiasts for those qualities that make architecture an art. Blatteau assumes that if architects are spurred by the plates he has chosen to imitate classical architectural detail, then the quality of contemporary architecture would be improved. He fails to grasp that if ornamentation is to become an aim in itself then one will be dealing, quite literally, with superficialities. Ornament arises from the ideal or principle needed to produce any coherent organizing form, whether that form be classical or modern architecture. An ornamental system evolved as a feature of one style cannot be applied with success to another architectural system, as was too obvious during the flying throes of Baux-Arts Classicism in America, which is what the members of Classical America wish to revive. How different is all this from our own dear Hugh Plummer, whose programme for a rigorous classical (ie Greek) revival remains still unpublished. Perhaps his American counterparts would care to take him

## Allegorical and economical

By Paula Neuss

proble to scholars today that the Reformation played a far more important role in giving English drama of the Elizabethan and Jacobean era its distinctive shape and quality than did the examples of classical antiquity and Renaissance Italy... [Early English religious] drama inevitably drew its structure from doctrine; and granted a doctrine of redemption obtainable through repentance, this drama was, inescapably, tragicomic. And later comedy and tragedy must thus be regarded as grafts upon this native root-stock, imposed somewhat awkwardly, by a relatively small but very articulate and influential group of bookmen.

The native English form is tragicomic: thus Sidney is answered. The Tudor plays were not right tragedies or comedies, because they were not supposed to be. Nor did they mean to conform to the unities [another of Sidney's complaints was that they didn't], though they sometimes did so in fact. (*Gammer Gurton's Needle* parodies classical convention, for example by having all terrifying events, such as the choking of Gib the cat, and the breaking of Rat Rat's head, take place "behind the door", offstage.) Often they covered many places and vast tracts of time conveniently and economically through allegory. They were also economical in their staging. Interludes are particularly easy plays to produce, because they require few actors (most of them are arranged for doubling, and can be put on by a company of four to six), no scenery and only the minimum of props: "most convenient", as one play says, "for such as be disposed, either to sleep this comedy in private houses, or otherwise".

The combination of allegorical mode and economical method produced their common and most typical characteristic, the use of "device", or symbol. The allegory was originally there to convey some moral message (another aspect of interludes that has helped to make them unpopular), but Tudor playwrights were more interested in the means of the medium than the message: in how they could most effectively and economically combine thought, word and deed. This was frequently done by the use of a "device": something like a dramatic concrete poem, where words, visual elements and actions all combine to produce a unique image that is more than the sum of its parts.

In the substantial central section of all the images considered in Wickham's chapter on "Device and Visual Figure" are of great interest. Some of them - combat, for example - might be basic elements of any drama, except that in Tudor interludes they relate to and combine with themes and arguments on the verbal level. The storming of the Castle of Perseverance is both an exciting tournament or *pas d'armes* and a metaphor of the human soul attacked by the World, the Flesh and the Devil. In the section on "disfigurement of faces", Lucifer's fall is put beside the face of Wit blackened by Ignorance in *Wit and Science* as

Wickham observes "this sensational and sardonic exemplum could be dramatized just as it stands". It would not really be that easy (the stage-effects would be very expensive), though if the stage-manager of *The Castle of Perseverance* could make gunpowder burn in the devil's hands, ears and arse, presumably molten metal could be made to run from this unfortunate man's nose, eyes and ears. But the point is that the author of *Jacob's Well* is using true verbal techniques. He creates a visual effect for his audience through his words, rather as is done in a radio play. The interludes use actions as well as words; the words do not have to do all the work on their own. (This is not as obvious as it sounds, for it is not always easy to visualize the action: the plays have far fewer stage-directions than is usual in later plays.) While some of the devices discussed in this chapter, such as word-play and jokes, are primarily verbal, others, such as "Songs and Atmospheres" have very little to do with language used dramatically.

This is a pity, for language does have an especially important role in moral plays, since it can sometimes symbolize or stand for action. Wickham implies as much in his section on "Disputation" which relates university training in rhetoric to play-writing. He is not happy with this device: "Disputation... possesses the awkward corollary of suggesting further questions... which... float provocatively around the play to tease and worry us long after the performance is over". This in fact was precisely the intention of writers like John Heywood (at least so Joel Altman suggests in *The Tudor Play of Mind*): "loose ends", as Wickham calls them, were part of the game, or play. Language itself is part of the game, and there are other devices than word-play, that might have been mentioned, such as repetition and stylistic variation. The constant hammering home of the idea of "hell" in the dialogues between Mephistopheles and Faustus is part of the device which the hell-mouth in the final scene also represents. The contrasting verbal styles of Vice and Virtue in many of the plays are one

Wickham observes "this sensational and sardonic exemplum could be dramatized just as it stands". It would not really be that easy (the stage-effects would be very expensive), though if the stage-manager of *The Castle of Perseverance* could make gunpowder burn in the devil's hands, ears and arse, presumably molten metal could be made to run from this unfortunate man's nose, eyes and ears. But the point is that the author of *Jacob's Well* is using true verbal techniques. He creates a visual effect for his audience through his words, rather as is done in a radio play. The interludes use actions as well as words; the words do not have to do all the work on their own. (This is not as obvious as it sounds, for it is not always easy to visualize the action: the plays have far fewer stage-directions than is usual in later plays.) While some of the devices discussed in this chapter, such as word-play and jokes, are primarily verbal, others, such as "Songs and Atmospheres" have very little to do with language used dramatically.

This is a pity, for language does have an especially important role in moral plays, since it can sometimes symbolize or stand for action. Wickham implies as much in his section on "Disputation" which relates university training in rhetoric to play-writing. He is not happy with this device: "Disputation... possesses the awkward corollary of suggesting further questions... which... float provocatively around the play to tease and worry us long after the performance is over". This in fact was precisely the intention of writers like John Heywood (at least so Joel Altman suggests in *The Tudor Play of Mind*): "loose ends", as Wickham calls them, were part of the game, or play. Language itself is part of the game, and there are other devices than word-play, that might have been mentioned, such as repetition and stylistic variation. The constant hammering home of the idea of "hell" in the dialogues between Mephistopheles and Faustus is part of the device which the hell-mouth in the final scene also represents. The contrasting verbal styles of Vice and Virtue in many of the plays are one

Wickham observes "this sensational and sardonic exemplum could be dramatized just as it stands". It would not really be that easy (the stage-effects would be very expensive), though if the stage-manager of *The Castle of Perseverance</*



way of symbolizing the choice that mankind has to make between them. The very choice of metre is a kind of device: Skelton, for example, shows his characters' loss of measure partly by their use of bastardized or "dog-greil" forms of Measure's four-stress rhyme-royal stanza.

The verse of these plays can cause problems, people being more used to the blank verse line. In the Revels volume Lois Potter has some useful things to say about how to read the four-stress line that derives from Old English, but she is unhappy with what she calls "turgid fourteeners". Lois Potter and Glynn Wickham both observe that while Nathaniel Woodes is able to depict "the nature and quality of the experience" of despair in *The Confession of Conscience*, his verse cannot rise to the heights of Marlowe's in *Faustus*. Lois Potter quotes, with some disapproval, Woodes' "obviously serious attempt to pull out all the stops for his hero's great outburst":

Oh painful pain of deep disdain, oh gripping grief of Hell;  
Oh horror huge, oh soul suppressed, and slain with desperation;  
Oh heap of sins, the sum whereof no mum can number well;  
Oh death, oh furious flames of Hell, my just recompensation;  
just wretched wight, oh creature cursed, oh child of condemnation;  
Oh angry God and merciless most fearful to behold  
Oh Christ, thou art no lamb to me, but lion fierce and bold.

But this is splendid stuff; read it aloud and the rhetorical devices have their proper function. The repetition and alliteration are not mere exaggeration but dramatically necessary:

## Wall-to-wall angst

By Michael Billington

IAN WATSON:

Conversations with Ayckbourn  
189pp. Macdonald, £8.95.  
0 354 04649 7

Alan Ayckbourn writes enormously funny, popular comedies about middle-class people for (by and large) middle-class audiences. For that reason he has had very little critical attention between hard covers. Such is the snobbery of English life that anyone who appeals to large numbers of people is automatically assumed to be second-rate (you only have to mention the name of Peter Shaffer in intellectual circles to see the knives being flashed). Yet Ayckbourn is serious as well as popular. His seventeen best-known full-length plays add up to a withering portrait of the horror of modern marriage, of the battleground of family life, of the sexual exploitativeness of middle-management, of the hollowiness of familiar social rituals. His chosen form is farce and comedy; but behind the laughter there is a good deal of pain and anger.

Something (but not a lot) of this emerges in Ian Watson's book, which consists of sympathetic, gently prodding chats with Ayckbourn. In many ways the least illuminating of the seven sections is "Plays and Themes", where Ayckbourn does some Boycott-like stonewalling when confronted with the darker aspects of his plays. If Pinter wrote about the sexual under the cocktail-cabinet, Ayckbourn is equally preoccupied with the rodent under the Dunlopillo, but he is reluctant (like most writers) to discuss extrapolated themes. He shoots down the kite which I once flew that he is a leftist subversive in boulevardier's clothing. Only on marriage, with its false expectations, its hurtful quarrels, its frequent subordination of one partner to another ("I think a big piece of it dies in a marriage"), does he start to expand and say a little more, perhaps, than he intends.

But there are so many points where we would have liked to see Watson (who, once stage-managed for Ayckbourn) turn more inquisitive. Why is Ayckbourn so fascinated, almost like a Scarborough Unsen, with the havoc wrought by the well-meaning? Why are mothers in his plays so often unseen destroyers? Is the quiet despair Ayckbourn de-

we are made to realize that the "horror" is "huge", the "fumes" "furious". The very choice of metre is a kind of device: Skelton, for example, shows his characters' loss of measure partly by their use of bastardized or "dog-greil" forms of Measure's four-stress rhyme-royal stanza.

And this brings us back to the question of tragedy-comedy. In his final chapter, "English Tragedy from its Origins to 1576" (the last part of his book is concerned with the genres of Comedy and Tragedy), Wickham points out that the possibilities of repentance and redemption in Tudor plays prevent them from doing more than "tremble on the brink of tragedy" and make them "shy away from the tragic potential". Even Wagner's *Die Walküre* is as good as a feast, which ends with the hero Wotan being carried off by Sigmund, a counterpart to the hero, Heavenly Man, who is saved (he could hardly not be, with a name like that). And Combes is "a lamentable tragedy mixed full of pleasant mirth". Wickham fittingly concludes:

If, twenty years later, Shakespeare could still mock such titles in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with "A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus/And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth" it must be remembered that he himself never elected to eliminate either mirth or "persons of low degree" from his own tragedies.

If Sidney was right to call Tudor drama "mongrel tragicomedy", then Shakespeare's plays too must be put in the doghouse.

## Life in a comic strip

By Richard Kwietniowski

ALFRED GUZZETTI:  
Two or Three Things I Know about Her  
366pp. Harvard University Press.  
£16.50.  
0 674 91500 3

Within the space of a year, Jean-Luc Godard appears to have made a successful return to art cinema with *Jeune Femme* (La Vie) and acquired new popular and critical recognition as a major director. His years in the cold as a controversial and extremist figure are forgotten. All this was conveyed in Britain by the considerable interest in his latest film, by the National Film Theatre retrospective, and by Collin McCabe's book on his work, all of which appeared at the end of last year.

Alfred Guzzetti's book, a shot-by-shot transcription of the 1966 film with an interpretative running commentary, reflects the growing academic interest in his work. Written out of inter-departmental sessions held weekly over an entire academic year at Harvard, it is an attempt to organize a reading out of its issues and concerns through detailed reference to his transcript.

Transcribing any film is difficult enough, but with Godard, problems are accentuated by the way sound and image contradict and collide as much as they combine (subtitling *Numéro Deux* entailed dealing with as many as four simultaneous speech sources). Guzzetti provides the original French dialogue, at least one frame enlargement per shot, and careful attention to how sound is displaced (score lines for significant

music, and different type-faces to distinguish off-screen, on-screen and voice-over speech).

The detail of this is impressive, and it goes much further than the conventional way of publishing a screenplay—dialogue plus occasional scene-descriptions (often taken from shooting scripts which undergo considerable changes in the filming process). But it is still very difficult to follow how the film places us in relation to what is significant in sound and image. We have to rely on Guzzetti's working out in the commentary, which provides little or no attention to how the spectator is "centred" or "de-centred" in the process of watching the film, a choice crucial to Godard's cinema.

This study is a sort of over-reading of what Guzzetti calls "the most complex and profound work of the most interesting and inventive filmmaker of our time". The film is very open to such an approach. It deals with a Paris working-class family, which adapts to the super-consumption of the economic boom in the 1960s, and the wife's turning to part-time prostitution. Godard's picture of capitalist and sexual oppression is placed within the changing city-scapes and a plethora of advertising images stressing women's appearance and routine. The intermingling of language and image is crucial: "to live in society today is to live in a giant comic strip".

Although Guzzetti's cross-references and contextualizing are thorough and often absorbing (including extracts from the newspaper articles which stimulated Godard into making the film, and the discovery that the entire lines of one scene are from a Jules Feiffer cartoon), there is a worrying absence in the dense and wandering prose of a distance between what is textual and what is not. Each sequence (he divides the film into eighteen parts) is

treated like a cryptogram related to Godard, with a seemingly endless array of connotations.

The problem stems from his first of Godard as the controlling language, who asks himself questions through the "I" of the film, the "voice" of the spoken commentary, and through character surrogates and objects with personal relevance. Guzzetti is in danger of treating the film too much as an artist's meditation. Some "expansions" are justifiable (shots of cranes read as pun on the French word "god", meaning both crane and "god", prostitute) while others are not (a San Francisco travelogue "serves Godard as an allusion to Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and its preoccupation with looking and making images, particularly those of women).

This permits him to disown any inconsistencies in Godard's text ("The image/sound combination he is not, I think, entirely under Godard's control"), and to make an extraordinary judgment of the second half as "thin, flat, and boring" because Godard claims to be making, which Guzzetti interprets as the negation of a "politics".

What this study negates is Godard's Oedipal emphasis on tradition, making, as McCabe says, images and sounds suggest, rather than coherently argue. This film, he set in motion a model of uncertainty in making films (as opposed to making political films); a method, that is, which engages the spectator in the uncertainty of his or her own position, exactly "cinema", but having to think out its production and consumption. As on attempt to put some of the heart of this film in a wider context Guzzetti's approach is good, but then a (self-proclaimed) analysis of the film, it is more a drift across

FICTION

## Love sickness

By Kate Flint

KATE LAZLO:  
Forever After  
278pp. The Bodley Head, £6.50.  
0 370 30904 9

The central characters of Kate Lazlo's moving novel are well aware of the potential corniness of their situation. Witty, attractive Sara—as the dust-jacket biller—falls passionately, irrevocably in love with Jason, her hospital doctor, who boasts the requisite heart-melting blend: professional success and warm brown eyes. This hospital romance is decidedly up-market, for lovers are in their forties, with stable if unsatisfying marriages, children, and a scene amount of real estate. Moreover, Sara is herself publicly successful, a writer, keeping her own record of her spreading disease, and initially selecting Jason as the subject of an article.

She poses him questions, not in an emotion-generating tête-à-tête, but in her neatly legible script: what would be his greatest professional triumph and worst trauma? He men or women better patients? Has he ever felt that a case warranted suicide or ever helped a patient who asked to die?

These last two questions are ones recurrently posed by the novel, for the theme of moral responsibility, in both medical and personal spheres, is as important as that of Sara and Jason's developing affair. Just as Sara perceives her doctor as a literary subject, so her body, for him, is much more than a site of sexual speculation and gratification. It is a love object independent of the passions, through which cancer spreads like a Mexican jumping bean from breast to bone, liver and lung, as he once learnt as a medical school litany. Sara struggles with increasingly severe stabs of pain, and

with maintaining a public witness rather than revealing her private agony and panic, not to mention with successive feelings of absurdity and guilt as her relationship with Jason develops. He, for his part, feels understandable caution at getting involved with a particular patient and simultaneously shows perpetual stress at being to some extent involved with them all, sympathizing with the grief and bitterness of a bereaved husband, and feeling robbed and frustrated himself when the teenage Laura fails to respond to any treatment. The fact of Sara's own unfavourable prognosis comes to deepen both his personal attachment to her and his professional tight against the disease. While cancer patients carry around clippings of miracle cures culled from magazines, so Jason is prepared, in the case of Sara, to look towards the fringes of the accepted medical world, investigating the reputed properties of an African tree-bark derivative.

Since this tree-bark treatment is being tested on a tropical island, festooned with the regalia of banqueting and parrots flitting among the nutmeg trees, Kate makes full use of the idyllic surroundings to heighten the emotion of this middle-aged love story. Certainly some of her dialogue is of the stuff of which waiting-room fictions are made. But what saves the novel from falling into sentimentalism is the technical specificity and accuracy of its medical details. It is not a story for hypochondriacs. Nor does it pretend to be reassuring about the lengthy process of bone scanning under the great searching medical eye, or to try to hide the side-effects of chemotherapy, radiation, hormone suppressants and a variety of named drugs. This romantic novel's title may echo a hundred popular fictions, but there is a deadly irony to the meaning of *Forever After*.

These last two questions are ones recurrently posed by the novel, for the theme of moral responsibility, in both medical and personal spheres, is as important as that of Sara and Jason's developing affair. Just as Sara perceives her doctor as a literary subject, so her body, for him, is much more than a site of sexual speculation and gratification. It is a love object independent of the passions, through which cancer spreads like a Mexican jumping bean from breast to bone, liver and lung, as he once learnt as a medical school litany. Sara struggles with increasingly severe stabs of pain, and

## Homage to Andalusia

By Peter Lewis

JOHN CANNON:  
Stranger to Sereno  
157pp. Bodley Head, £6.50.  
0 370 30431 4

The back dust-jacket of John Cannon's first novel, *Stranger to Sereno*, is most unusual in being a drawing of the author rather than a photograph. Taken in conjunction with the opening section of the book, it creates intriguing possibilities of some kind of reflexive or even Chinese-box narrative in which Cannon will function as both author and participant.

The first-person narrator of the prologue, a professional writer who does voluntary work for the Salvation Army and is planning a visit to Spain where he is going to write a stage version of a classic novel, could easily be identified with Cannon himself, who recently spent five years in Andalusia and who dedicates the book "To all my friends in Spain". The narrator describes his meetings with an elderly man dying of cancer, Richard Whitehouse, once an artist specializing in portraits and himself the son of a painter. Whitehouse, after revealing his life story, urges the narrator to follow in his footsteps by visiting the village of Sereno del Rio in Andalusia, where the most memorable events of his life took place in 1936.

Yet if the prologue sets up a number of possible fictional gambits, the rest of the novel (apart from a three-page epilogue) fails to pursue any of them except for the most straightforward. The first-person narrator gives way to a thoroughly orthodox third-person omniscient narrative describing Whitehouse's arrival in Sereno not long before the Spanish Civil War and his subsequent but unintentional involvement in the events of that bloody summer. *Stranger to Sereno* is, therefore, a novel about the Civil War, but one in which Cannon narrows his focus to one village during the early stages of the rebellion.

So much has been written about the Spanish Civil War, including a great deal of sentimental and political nonsense, that we have the right to expect any new work, whether fiction or non-fiction, to justify itself by illuminating the conflict in an unexpected way. What a novel could do that would still be valuable would be to recreate the Spanish experience of that time from within. By limiting the canvas of his novel to one community, ranging from aristocratic landowner through the village bourgeoisie to the skilled and unskilled artisans and peasants, Cannon creates the means to provide such a treatment. Sadly, he muffs the opportunity.

Not that Cannon presents us with a set of walking slogans, or sees things in terms of black and white: the landlord, Don Francisco, may run his estate like a medieval lord but he is far from being a fascist beast, while some of the loyalist and leftist fighters are just as capable of vicious brutality as the regular soldiers who arrive in Sereno to revenge the villagers' successful siege. Nevertheless, most of the characterization is superficial so that even the principal figures, apart from the only non-Spanish one (Whitehouse), conform to predictable types: the village blacksmith and strong man, Jesus Vargas, who is also an anarchist and natural leader of men; the schoolmaster intellectual, Antonio Miranda, who is also the traitor within the gates; the priest, Don Carlos, whose political allegiances are inevitably thought to be reactionary.

Cannon's account of the villagers' battle with the local police, their wrecking of Don Francisco's *hacienda*, and the reprisals of the army, works well at the level of exciting narrative, and his treatment of an Englishman accidentally caught up in a social and political conflagration does not comprehend an unusual and interesting. Yet while the events Cannon describes do epitomize much that went on during the Civil War, he would have had to be more artistically daring to clarify the complex and contradictory human factors underlying those events.

## commentary

### Aristotle and the art of football

By Andrew Hislop

Escape to Victory  
Odeon Cinema, Leicester Square

"None of us feel or look like world-class players" – the cackney tones come a little less naturally now, but Michael Caine's body is true to the words as he waddles out with his squad of prisoners of war to train for their football match against the German national team. Too true. The squad have been given better tutors by the Germans, but from the beginning of the film Caine looks as though he has been putting in extra training in Langan's Brasserie for a De Niro grow-with-you-part role, rather than for that of a West Ham and England footballer toughened by Nazi bed and board. A diminutive Spanish waiter appears to have been brought along to give credence to Caine's opinions of the players. Close inspection reveals, however, that he is Spurs' Argentinian midfielder player "Ossie" Ardiles.

The trouble with *Escape to Victory* is not that it demands the suspension of disbelief – one form of audience participation which never harms the box-office – but that it disturbs its credibility by giving us grounds for belief and then changing the cinematic codes of credibility before our eyes. Caine, with a little make-believe, can be accepted as a footballer (Puskas and Francis Lee were never Twiggies). This is the basic "we know he can't but we'll pretend he can" actor-as-hero form of suspension of disbelief. Pele and Bobby Moore can be accepted as unknown discoveries. (Pele plays a Trinidadian soldier) This is the "we know he can and will but we'll pretend we don't" hero-as-actor form of suspension of disbelief which invites the audience and hero against those members of Equity pretending not to be in the know). We can even accept the combination of both these forms

when, at the beginning of the film, Caine, the old pro, organizes matches to see which of the prisoners is good enough to play a German army team. (Pele, Moore and John Wark among others pass the test.) But then the match is upgraded to be against the German national team. Caine asks for, and gets, sundry international footballers from other prisoner-of-war camps. These are played, except for the East Europeans, by sundry international footballers who, though better known on the Continent, are far less famous than the "unknowns", Moore and Pele.

At this point the film shifts to our confusion by abandoning all pretence of explanation as to who's who – whether each player, however well-known he is, is meant to be playing an unknown, a not so well-known or a very well-known footballer. An encyclopaedic knowledge of football only adds to the problem. The film recognizes the talented young Ipswich winger Kevin O'Callaghan, only to find him playing the English goalkeeper. This miscasting, perverse even by Hollywood's standards, comes to a brief and brutal end when Caine has to break O'Callaghan's arm so that Sylvester Stallone can take his place. (This is the "Early Bats" form of escape: a gaping hole made in the communal bath which leads to the Paris sewers.) As Rocky, Stallone is a curious case of the double-helix retrospective form of suspension of disbelief – we believe in him more as a bum no-hope boxer made good because he was a bum no-hope actor made good by

making a film about a bum: hence *Rocky II, III*. . . . In this film we know he'll make good and save the vital penalty, but because he's got to pretend not to be Rocky between the remakes he catches the ball rather than punches it away.

A complete ignorance of footballing personalities does not avoid all confusion either, since we are left with the question of which players look like players. Some look fit throughout the film, others like Moore, Mike Summerbee and the Dutchman Co Prins have obviously dabbled with hrasverie training techniques (and Prins has grey hair to boot). One could be prepared to leave out all consideration of the physical attributes of footballers for the sake of the film, but for the East Europeans, who turn out to be skeletons too emaciated to kick a ball the "we know they can't but we'll pretend they could" minor-actors-as-fallen-heroes form of suspension. One could even pretend that though one can be too thin to play football, it is difficult to be too fat. But then Ardiles looks all bones.

To distract us from this collective identity crisis, the non-playing cast prove that a new generation of English actors can slip into their war-film roles as easily as the last (Clive Merrison is excellent as the camp forger), and the Germans speak German even to Sylvester Stallone. There is a theme of class conflict between the officers, who put escape before football, and the players, who put football before escape; and John Huston proves that great directors have to earn a living.

The match itself is a mixture of contact karate and amazing ball skills. Who wins? Let us say that the German team consists of the Hungarian national team (the "most foreigners will do as most foreigners form of suspension), two Ipswich reserves and the captain of the New York Cosmos who has entered acting school. He shows great eyeball control in his star-out with Stallone.

### The Fringe and the future of theatre

By Harold Hobson

Andrew Cruickshank, the famous National Theatre actor who for many years past has been president of the Fringe at the Edinburgh Festival, chaired a conference on August 24 of which the declared purpose was to "discuss the theatre, its finance, its present condition, its future, and its relationship to the Fringe." These words occurred not only in the announcements of the official Festival brochure, which is the bible, constantly consulted, of the 450 companies which make up the Fringe, but on hundreds of leaflets displayed in shop windows throughout Edinburgh, for Mr Cruickshank is well known to be very apprehensive (as well he might be) of what will happen when the leaves of many West End theatres fall in during the next few years. The question in the minds of everyone connected with this conference, widely considered to be the most important Fringe event of the Festival, was what, if anything, can the Fringe do to help to save the theatre?

The answer given by the conference was unequivocal. The attitude to the theatre of the sort of company which belongs to the Fringe has changed beyond recognition during the last quarter of a century. In 1958 the theatre, as the ordinary theatre, was understood to be a place where a writer understood the term was a fortress to be besieged. Beckett, Brecht, Osborne and Pinter had already breached its walls. It was a place that the young desired to capture. But it was sadly obvious from the conference that Fringe companies now regard the conventional and subsidized theatres not as for-

resses, but as broken-down shacks to be ignored. There are no new Pinters and Becketts to keep interest in the theatre alive. Julian Parnish (Oxford Theatre Group) said as much when he declared that for the last twenty years the Group has had to write its own plays. Hundreds of people had been expected to turn up at the meeting. At the morning session there were not more than fifty.

It is impossible to question even fifty people, but as far as I could make out, of the 450 Fringe companies, only four had sent a representative. This honourable and concerned quarter were the Edinburgh Graduate Theatre Group, London University, Oxford, and Miss Dorothy Stuart, who is presenting a one-woman show called *Moll Flanders*. Four companies out of sixty times as many suggests that what the Fringe will do for the theatre as Mr Cruickshank understands it is nothing.

There was some talk of the finances of the Fringe. Richard de Marco, whose services to the Fringe, particularly in the introduction of Polish companies, have been remarkable, is in favour of subsidy for it. The temper of the meeting was strongly opposed to subsidy, but a London representative pointed out that it had cost his company £100 merely to transport its sets from London to Edinburgh. He wondered whether something could not be done to co-ordinate transport, which would bring about considerable economies. This idea was received with great favour, and Mr Cruickshank agreed enthusiastically to do something about it. Somebody wondered whether artists appearing in the Fringe, often with little free to spare, might not be given free admis-

sion to other Fringe shows. Mr Parnish who is a master of clear speech, indicated that if a show is worth putting on, it is worth paying to see. As one who hasn't paid for his seat once in the last forty years, I regard this view with sympathy.

The meeting, however, was not concerned only with itself. We were all gathered together in the Fringe Club, which stands like a grim Bastille amidst a scene of destruction and desolation that spells the ruin of one of Edinburgh's loveliest areas, George Square. This desecration is the work, not of capitalist entrepreneurs (who are expected to do anything for money) but of the University of Edinburgh. An exceptionally charming and broadminded don had explained to me the day before that it was an example of true tragedy: the accomplishment of good by the destruction of good.

With such representatives of the Fringe and the general public as had turned up, however, this argument did not wash. The conduct of the University was condemned without any voice except that of Mrs Mickey York (Edinburgh Graduate Theatre Group) being raised in its defence. This was a bizarre ending to a meeting called to discuss how the Fringe could help the future of the theatre. So far as I was able to make out (I arrived towards the close of Mr Cruickshank's opening speech) the subject of the meeting was never even mentioned. As Scotland's Edinburgh University had received its reproach Cruickshank declared the morning session to be closed, and indicated, to the consternation of visitors from New Zealand and other distant places, that the afternoon session would not take place.